Advice to the Muslims

(Nasīhat-ul Muslimīn Tarjumah Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn)

Imām Hārith Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (243 A.H)

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān Ilāhābādī dāmat barakātuhu

Annotated by:

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Publisher's Preface

Alhamdulillāh, Maktabah Dār-ul-Ma'ārif, Ilāhābād, has the honour of publishing this important work, 'Nasīhat-ul-Muslimīn', translation of Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn, of Imām Abū 'Abdullāh Hārith Ibn Asad Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (243 A.H). Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has written a valuable annotation to this work. His work is of a very high standard and holds the position of being an independent commentary.

My noble father had great love for this book and was worried about its translation. However, engagement with other works, local and foreign journeys and the coming and meeting with associates did not give him the chance. During a lengthy journey covering a number of countries, he would normally keep a copy of the Qur'ān, a few books and blank paper. It so happened that this book 'Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn' was in the bag on the next journey.

This journey was thirty-five days, starting from Ilāhābād on 26 Jumād-al-Ūlā 1428/13 June 2007. My noble father went on 14 June 2007 by Gulf Airlines to Bahrain, then London. The plane was delayed for a few hours, so he started to study the book at the airport. He studied the book a number of times before but because he was going to translate it this time, he started to read through it again.

There were programmes in a number of cities in England. Together with giving advice, he kept this book with him.

On 25 June 2007, he departed from London to Toronto. He started the translation at the home of Muhammad Mūsā Jogiat. He continued with the work after that. Whilst here, he had a lengthy meeting with Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu. My noble father said, “I am translating the text of the author, you can have a look at it.” Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu read it and showed his like for it. My noble father requested him to translate the annotation of the work. Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu was quite ill at the time. He accepted and started with it when he gained some strength. My noble father and I continued on the journey to Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Panama. We then returned to London and then Delhi. All praise is for Allāh.

We disembarked on 1 Rajab 1428/17 July 2007 and reached Ilāhābād the same day. My father translated this book on the long travelling hours in the plane. He completed most of it in this time and then on 18 Rajab 1428/3 August 2007, he finished the work in Ilāhābād. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى reward him with the best of rewards. Āmīn

On the other side, Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu came to his hometown of Kāpaudra in Gujerat. We found out that despite his ailing health, he did the translation with great effort, worry and enthusiasm. When we went to visit him on 4 Dhul-Hijjah 1428/15

December 2007, he said, "I had intended to send the document by post today. You have come and can now take it directly. I will have peace of mind. Despite his ailing condition, the completion of the translation is a sign of great sincerity. We are all greatly indebted to Maulānā 'Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ keep him over us with safety and in good health for a long time and accept him for great service of Dīn. Āmīn

Maulānā Iqbāl Tankārwī (principal of Dār-ul-'Ulūm Mātliwālā) got the composing done. Maulānā Fadl Mahmūd Falāhī stayed in Ilāhābād for almost the entire year to work on different books. In this way, the work was completed in the best way.

There were a number of 'Ulamā' that helped in bringing this work to fruition. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ reward them abundantly. Āmīn

Shabbir Bhai Lulat of Zambia helped in the publication of this work. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ grant him good health and keep him safely with us for a long time and grant him the best of rewards. Āmīn

Muhammad 'Abdullāh Qamr-uz-Zamān
Maktabah Dār-ul-Ma'ārif
18 Shawwāl 1430

Foreword: Maulānā Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān dāmat barakātuhu

الحمد لله الذي بعث في الأميين رسولا منهم يتلو عليهم آياته ويزكيهم والصلوة والسلام على النبي يبين للناس سبيل الهداية والصراط المستقيم وعلى أصحابه وأتباعه الذين سلكوا المسلك القويم ، أما بعد

Maulānā Ismā'īl Bhuta had gifted the book 'Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn' to me a few years ago. However, I could not study it at the time. I got the chance to go through it later and found it to be very effective and full of wisdom and foresight.

Moreover, the painstaking annotation was done by Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ also published it in an excellent way. This caused the benefit of the work to be spread far and wide. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ reward him with the best of rewards. Āmīn

I had the great enthusiasm to translate this work when reading the annotation of Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ so that it will be a means of guidance for the Urdu speaking students treading the path of Sulūk.

We began this work in the home of brother Mūsā in Toronto, Canada, on 12 Jumād-uth-Thānī 1428 and continued with it until it was completed on 18 Rajab 1428 in Ilāhābād. Through the grace of Allāh, it took a month and six days. All praise is for Allāh.

As for the annotation of this great work, written by Shaykh ‘Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, it contains the research of the Ahādīth in the work, clarification of any objections that could be raised and other beneficial notes. We requested Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu, saying, “If you translate it, then this work will, Inshā Allāh, be very beneficial for the Ummah and will create foresight in the field of Tasawwuf.”

Māshā Allāh, Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu is an expert in Urdu and Arabic, something necessary for translation. Moreover, he has a pure scholarly taste and an affiliation with the sciences of the inner self. Due to this, this work was given to the worthy person. That is the grace of Allāh, He grants it to whoever He wants.

Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu accepted my requested and completed the translation in an excellent way. The scholars showed their like for it.

I was not completely satisfied with the translation I did, so I sent it to Maulānā Mujīb-ullāh Al-Ghaffār to edit. He remained engaged with this task through Ramadhān 1428. He clarified my translation in certain places. We make Du’ā’ that may Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ grant him the best of rewards in the hereafter and with good health and strength in this world. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ let the students benefit from his knowledge and practice for a long time. Āmīn

After this, we gave the translation to Maulānā Maqsūd Ahmad Qāsimī and Maulānā ‘Abdur-Rashād Bastawī

for further editing. They studied it and modified the translation wherever they felt a need to do so. Due to this, we were satisfied with the correctness of the translation. We are very grateful to them.

Maulānā ‘Abdur-Rashīd Bastawī translated the preface and introductory notes of Shaykh ‘Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

These notes are quite lengthy and the original book only starts after that. Keeping the hurry of people in mind, to get to the book, we placed it at the end. Maulānā Mujīb-ul-Ghaffār رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ added a note at the end. He had recently passed away (10 Shawwāl 1430), so we have written a brief biography of him too. We hope that the readers will like this sequence.

May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ grant us the ability to benefit from this rare and beneficial book and grant us the ability to practice on the guidance and advice it contains. Āmīn

Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān
7 Shawwāl 1430

Foreword: Maulānā ʻAbdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu

The famous ascetic and worshipper, Imām Abū ʻAbdullāh Hārith Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, reached a very high level in terms of esoteric and exoteric knowledge. A large number of people have benefitted from his works and until now, there are scholars and people of knowledge that draw from his scholarly treasures.

He رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ left behind a great treasure of about two hundred books. One of these is Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn. The great Arab scholar, Shaykh ʻAbdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ saw the manuscript of this book, and in appreciation of it, he published it with his annotation.

The book gained immense popularity because of its beautiful subject matter and invaluable annotation. In a short while, it reached the eleventh edition.

The depth of knowledge of Shaykh ʻAbdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ is well-known. One will find a treasure of information and gems in the works that he has worked on. This book is no exception. One will find rare and beneficial pieces of research in the introduction and annotation of this book.

A group of people in our time have a dislike for the field of Tasawwuf. They say that the Sūfiyā' are astray and remember them as innovators. Without naming any group,

Shaykh ‘Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has clarified the reality of Tasawwuf in a positive way and has shown the services of the Sūfiyā’ in the field of reformation. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ reward him with the best of rewards on behalf of the Muslims. Āmīn

Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn and its annotation was in Arabic. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān dāmat barakātuhu intended to translate it into clear and lucid Urdu. Subsequently, on his journey to Canada in 1428 A.H, he started the work and indicated that he wants me to be part of this project of goodness. I expressed my gratitude to Hadrat Maulānā for granting me the chance to acquire some reward from this good deed.

The subject matter of the book itself and the annotation will prove very beneficial for the ‘Ulamā’, students and Sālikīn. The former Muftī of Egypt, Shaykh Muhammad Hasanayn Makhlūf رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote a letter about this book. Through this, one can gauge the value and appreciation that the scholars show for this book.

May Allāh bless this effort with acceptance and may He reward the author and annotator with the best of rewards. May He grant the Ummah the divine ability to benefit from it. Āmīn

‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī
7 Shawwāl 1430
27 September 2009

Foreword: Maulānā Sayyed Dhul-Fiqār dāmat barakātuhu

The Sharī'ah of Muhammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has explained all types of wisdom in deed in detail. Therefore, the philosophers do not delve into this. They only discuss wisdom of viewpoints and its types.

There are three types of wisdom in deed.

1. Reformation of Character
2. Administration of the home
3. Politics of the Country

The Sharī'ah has discussed these extensively. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has explained all of their principles and etiquettes. There is no aspect of reformation of character, reformation of the condition of a person and nurturing of the inner self that the teachings and guidance of Islām has overlooked.

Why is it necessary to reform the carnal self? What are its plans and plots? What should be done to be saved from it? How should a person protect himself from the plans of the carnal self and the attacks of Shaytān? All the means to be adopted for this is found in detail in the Sharī'ah of Muhammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

In the time of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, through the munificence of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the Sahābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ would be cleansed and reformed. Looking at him, coming to his gathering, performing Salāh with him, and participating

in Du'ā' with him washed away the dust on man and purified them.

After the time of the Sahābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, as people went further away from the era of Nubuwwah, spiritual ills started. So, the masters of the inner self and the Tābi'īn like Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and others realized a decrease and shortcoming of fear for the hereafter in the people. They saw people engaging fully in the world, so they started the system of staying in their company to reform one's self. It is from that time that the Khānqah system came about and continued. It had tremendous benefit for the reformation of the carnal self and purification of the inner self.

After this, there were thousands of reformers (Muslihīn) that created a concern to beautify people with virtues and purify them from evil. They possessed excellent conduct and stayed away from lowly character traits. These reformers created a revolution in the world of excellent and noble character through reforming their associates by their wisdom-filled advises that affected the hearts. Abū 'Abdullāh Hārith Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ became prominent in the third century in Basrah. Through the ability bestowed on him by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, he gained a lofty status in knowledge and spirituality. He served in the fields of Fiqh, Usūl-ul-Fiqh and Hadīth. He wrote many beneficial works. He also wrote many booklets in Tasawwuf and Tarbiyat or Sulūk.

One of the works that he authored was Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn. It contained many rare and effective advises on the topic of Sulūk. A disciple of Maulānā Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān dāmat barakātuhu gave a copy of this book to him. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has blessed Hadrat Maulānā with great expertise in the field of Tasawwuf and reformation of the carnal self. The numbers of people that benefit from Hadrat Maulānā in India and beyond are in the thousands. Hadrat Maulānā has written many books already on Tasawwuf and Sulūk. He has compiled a massive work, 'Aqwāl-e-Salaf' on the sayings of the pious over a period of fourteen years. This is a treasure that goes into a number of thick volumes. He has spent many years in the Khānqahs of the great Mashāyikh, striving and acquiring munificence from them. He remained under the care of these luminaries and acquired Khilāfat and Ijāzat.

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān dāmat barakātuhu found this booklet of Imām Hārith Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ very beneficial and translated it from Arabic to Urdu. Imām Hārith Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote very comprehensively. Understanding the background, reaching the purport of the author and taking out the intricate points of benefit was difficult for every person. Therefore, the famous scholar of the Arab world, Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote a lengthy annotation to it. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān dāmat barakātuhu requested the outstanding scholar of Gujerat, Maulānā

'Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu to translate this annotation. Maulānā 'Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu has written a number of excellent works in history and education.

Together with being a teacher, reformer and preacher, Maulānā 'Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu has a strong bond with Tasawwuf and Sulūk. He has acquired much benefit from the pious. Therefore, he was the ideal person to translate the annotation. He did an excellent job and presented a clear and lucid translation for those who speak Urdu. This beautified the work even further.

The complete work comprising of the translation of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān dāmat barakātuhu and the work of Maulānā 'Abdullāh Kāpaudrī dāmat barakātuhu is now before you. It is a rare gift for the seekers on the path of Sulūk and it holds the status of a guiding post for those traversing the path. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ grant those involved in Tasawwuf and Sulūk the ability to gain maximum benefit from this book and may He grant an excellent reward to the author, translator and annotator. Āmīn

Preface to Eleventh Edition

الحمد لله القدوس الوهاب ، والصلوة والسلام على سيدنا محمد المبعوث بالحكمة والكتاب ، الهادي للحق والصواب ، لمن كان من اولى النهى والالباب ، أما بعد ،

This book was very beloved and extremely valuable in the sight of my father (Shaykh ‘Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ). He placed the cream of the summary of his knowledge and fortitude in it. Moreover, he added his knowledge of character and nurturing and his deep recognition of the correct Tasawwuf to it.

If I say that this book is the soul and life, or the spirituality of my father, then it will be correct. My father wrote the annotation with his lamentation and watered it with his deep sighs.

This is because my father had hope with being linked to this book; it will prove to be a minaret of light and illuminating lamp for the contemporary young boys and girls who seek steadfastness in general and especially for the seekers on the path (Mustarshidīn). He had aspired that this book be a guide and lamppost for the seekers of guidance. O Allāh, accept this service of my father, forgive him, illuminate his grave, broaden his resting place and grant the Muslims the best replacement for him.

My father cried in Du’ā’ on countless occasions for those who benefit from this book. Therefore, I request the

students to make an abundance of Du'ā' for mercy and grace to be shown to him. Please do remember me in your special Du'ā's too. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى reward those who make Du'ā' of goodness. Āmīn

وصلى الله وسلم وبارك على سيد الأولين والآخرين ، وإمام الغر المحجلين ، وقرة عيون السائرين الصادقين ، وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين ، واعف عنا معهم بعفوك وجودك وكرمك واحسانك يا أرحم الراحمين ، وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Salmān Ibn 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah
10 Ramadhān 1424
Jeddah

Preface to Second Edition

الحمد لله ولى كل حمد وثناء ، والصلاة والسلام على رسوله سيدنا محمد خاتم الرسل والأنبياء ، وعلى آله وصحبه وأتباعه نجوم الاهتداء والاقتداء ، أما بعد ،

This is the second edition of Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn of Imām Abū ‘Abdullāh Hārith Ibn Asad Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. The first edition was widely accepted and has been sold out. All praise is for Allāh upon His grace and mercy. This second edition has much more added in terms of research and a significant amount has been added to the annotation. We have done this because the incidents of the pious predecessors, their biographies and experiences are much more accepted by the souls; they cause a greater incentive to practice and hold onto these teachings and are proven purer for the hearts and thoughts. These advantages are not found in clear commands or prohibitions. The Noble Qur’ān states the excellence of this method and emphasizes it. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says,

وَلَقَدْ جَاءهُم مِّنَ الْأَنبَاء مَا فِيهِ مُزْدَجَرٌ

News of that which has lesson in it has come to them (Sūrah Al-Qamar, 4)

Sayyidunā Junayd Baghdādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “The incidents and narrations are an army from the armies of Allāh. Allāh grants steadfastness to the hearts of His friends through

them." He was asked, "Is there any proof for this?" He said, "The proof lies in the verse, 'Whatever We narrate to you of the stories of the Ambiyā', through it your heart becomes firm.'" It is for this reason that Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The incidents of the 'Ulamā' and speaking about their good traits is more beloved to me than a great amount of Fiqh because these are the texts and descriptions of the etiquette and character of the pious. The proof for this is the verse, 'These are the people whom Allāh has guided, so follow their guidance', Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ also says, 'Indeed there is lesson in their stories for those who understand'."

Muhammad Ibn Yūnus رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I have not seen anything more beneficial for the hearts than discussions of the pious."

Mālik Ibn Dīnār رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "These incidents are a gift from Jannah." Another pious man said, "Mention these incidents and stories in great abundance because they are gems and jewels. Sometimes one finds a unique pearl amongst them."

Sufyān Ibn 'Uyaynah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The mercy of Allāh descends when the righteous are mentioned."[1]

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[1] Hāfiz Ibn Salāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in Ma'rifah Anwā' Ilm al-Hadīth p.209, 'Abū 'Amr Ismā'īl Ibn Nujayd narrated to us that he asked Abū Ja'far Ahmad Ibn Hamdān Nayshāpūrī, "With what intention should I write Hadīth?" He said, "Do

you people not narrate the statement that the mercy of Allāh descends when the pious are mentioned?" I said, "Yes." So he said, "Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is the leader of the righteous."

Hāfiz Suyūtī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in Tadrīb ur-Rāwī p.344 and Imām Abū Dāwūd رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in Masā'il Imām Ahmad p.283 relates a similar statement.

Whatever I have mentioned above is mostly drawn from Jāmi' Bayān al-'Ilm wa Fadlihi of Hāfiz Ibn 'Abdul Barr رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ vol.1 p.127, Tartīb-ul-Madārik of Qādī Iyād رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ vol.1 p.23, Al-I'lān bit Taubīkh liman Dhamma Ahl-ut-Tārīkh of Hāfiz Sakhāwī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ p.20 and Azhār-ur-Riyād of Maqarrī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ vol.1 p.21, 22. The statement of Muhammad Ibn Yūnus رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ is from Sifat-us-Safwah of Ibn Jauzī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ vol.1p.45. The statement of Sayyidunā Junayd Baghdādī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ is mentioned in Al-Luqat fī Hikāyāt As-Sālihīn. The statement of Mālik Ibn Dīnār رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ is also mentioned in this book.

Accounts of the Pious in the Gatherings of the Muhaddithīn:

From a very long time, the Muhaddithīn used to mention interesting incidents during their gatherings or at the end of them in order to bring tranquility to the hearts and to refresh the minds. Hāfiz Abū Sa'd Sam'ānī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in Adab-ul-Imlā' wal Istimlā' p.70 mentions from a great and reliable scholar, Sulaymān Ibn Harb, "We were sitting with Hammād

The Right of the Pious upon those who benefit from them

I have tried to attribute all the statements and incidents to those who said them and were involved in them. This is

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Ibn Zayd. He narrated a number of Ahādīth to us. After this, he said, "You should now start discussing the spices of Jannah." He then mentioned a number of incidents to us. Similarly, Abū Hāmid Ahmad Ibn Imām Asbahānī narrates, "I heard Imām Barqī saying, "These stories are seeds with which the hearts are hunted."

Imām Asma'ī narrates from 'Abd-ur-Rahmān, "I heard my uncle saying that Hārūn Ar-Rashīd said to me, "Listen to these stories in great abundance. They are scattered pearls, sometimes there will be a priceless one amongst them."

Spices are items used to enhance the aroma and taste of the food. This indicates to the enjoyable incidents and stories. They urge a person onto goodness and removes the tiredness in his heart and body. One will find attractive homour, beloved things that please the heart, religiousness and the biographies of the pious that encourage one onto piety.

because mercy will descend on us when we mention them. Moreover, when discussing their pure biographies and fragranced lives, I have held firmly onto the practice of writing رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Imām Abū Muhammad Tamīmī Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "It is very bad that you benefit from us, yet you do not speak about us or make Du'ā' of mercy for us."[1]

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[1] Al-Ilmā' of Qādī Iyādh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ p.227, At-Ta'rīf bil Qādī Iyādh p.82, Ifādat-un-Nasīh of Ibn Rushayd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Kutub Barāmij Al-'Ulamā' fil Andalus of Dr. 'Abdul 'Azīz Ahwanī.

Abū Muhammad Tamīmī: Imām Abū Muhammad Rizq-ullāh Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb Ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz Ibn Hārith Tamīmī Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He was among the senior scholars of the Hanābilah. He was born in 396 A.H and passed away in 488 A.H. He was a scholar, jurist, pious person, intelligent, and eloquent orator. Details of him can be found in Dhayl Tabaqāt Al-Hanābilah vol.1 p.77-85 of Ibn Rajab Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Al-Manhaj Al-Ahmad vol.2 p.164-170 of Shaykh 'Ulaymī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

Respect of the Students for their Teachers is a Right and Debt upon them:

Imām Khattāb Mahfūz Ibn Ahmad Kalwadhānī Baghdādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (510 A.H) indicated towards the point that when

speaking about one's teachers, it is a right and debt upon the students to adopt respect and honour. If anyone falls short in this regard, the debt will be collected from him. He says in a poem, 'I am a Shaykh. Such knowledge which is hidden from the youth will be acquired through respect for one's teachers. Therefore, when you speak about me, then adopt respect and honour. This is because this is a debt that will be returned through the scale of deeds.' These lines are quoted by Ibn Rajab Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Dhayl Tabaqāt Al-Hanābilah vol.1 p.348, under the biography of Ahmad Ibn Abul-Wafā'.

Honour for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ and His Rasūl صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ when mentioning them:

In his introduction to his commentary of Sahīh Muslim vol.1 p.39, Imām Nawawī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'He who writes Hadīth, it is best for him to write Azza wa Jall, Ta'ālā, Subhānahu wa Ta'ālā, Tabāraka wa Ta'ālā, Jalla Dhikruhu, Tabāraka Ismuhu, Jallat Adhamatuhu, or similar words when mentioning the name of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. Similarly, when mentioning Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, then one should write the complete salutation, صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, one should not suffice on a sign only.

Seeking the Mercy of Allāh and Asking Allāh to be Pleased with the Sahābah, Tābi'īn and later Scholars and Pious:

One must say and write رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ with the name of a Sahābī. If the father and son are both Sahābah, he must use, رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا, and it will be preferable to use رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ with the names of other scholars and pious personalities. One must give due importance to saying these words, whether they are printed in the text or not. These are words of Du'ā', not words of the narration itself, hence one will not find it printed as part of the text.

Similarly, if these words are not mentioned in the text, then too, one should say them when reading. One must not tire from saying them repeatedly. The person who overlooks this has been deprived of great goodness and he has lost out a huge bounty.'

Imām Nawawī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says in Al-Adhkār p.100, 'It is preferable to write رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ or رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ with the names of the Sahābah, Tābi'īn and the scholars and pious that came after them.'

Some 'Ulamā' have written that رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is specific with the Sahābah. This is not the case and it cannot be accepted. The correct view of the majority is that it is preferable (Mustahab) to say رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ for a non-Sahābī. There are countless proofs for this. Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says that one of the proofs is the following verse of Sūrah Al-Bayyinah, 'Their reward with their Rabb is

the eternal gardens, beneath which rivers flow, to stay there forever, Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allāh, that is for the one who fears his Rabb.' If the person being mentioned is a Sahābī and his father is a Sahābī too, like Sayyidunā Ibn 'Umar, Sayyidunā Ibn 'Abbās, Sayyidunā Ibn Ja'far, Sayyidunā Usāmah Ibn Zayd, then one must write and say رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا so that the Du'ā' can be made for the Sahābī and his father.'

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says that one of the demands of knowledge and part of the essence of practicing on knowledge is to adopt respect and honour when mentioning the names of the reliable scholars, worshippers and pious. This can never be exaggeration or useless as some 'enlightened' Muslims feel, in following the Orientalists. These people cut off the names of the Imāms and write their names in short form with great disrespect.

If there is no severe need to adopt brevity, then this shortening of the name is contrary to the way of the 'Ulamā' of the past. In addition, it contradicts the natural respect and honour that a person must adopt with the great scholars and pious. When a person will take their names with honour, then love for them is built into one's nature, honour for them in the heart is developed, one will gauge their rank

and status and the enthusiasm to follow them in deed and benefit from them will be enlivened. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ be pleased with them and may He reward them with the best of rewards on our behalf. Āmīn

The great scholar and thinker, Maulānā Sayyed Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said in Al-Imām Al-Ladhi lam Yuwaffa Haqqahu min Al-Insāf wal-I'tirāf p.76, "Those of a sound nature and correct temperament agree that those of virtue must be recognized. Gratitude must be shown to those who do favour, defend their country or nation, those who gave their lives for the defence of respect, religion and belief. Similarly, those nations whose nature it is to remain established on the balanced way and have a pious nature also hold the view that such personalities should always be remembered so that together with acknowledging their goodness, it will spur the next generation on in following them. Even the western nations have given importance to this and adopt it with even a soldier whose name is not even known."

"As for the believers and followers of the Ambiyā', acknowledging their favour and being grateful for their bounty should be much more than every other nation and group. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ introduces the people of faith as

people who acknowledge favours and are foremost in making Du'ā' and in acknowledging the virtue of those that have passed on. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى says, 'And those who come after them say, 'O our Rabb forgive us and our brethren that passed before us with faith and do not place malice in our hearts for the believers, O our Rabb, indeed you are Compassionate, Merciful' (Sūrah Al-Hashr).

The disbelievers and dwellers of Jahannam are introduced as those who are ungrateful, curse those who passed on before them, those who show hatred and free themselves from their predecessors and so on. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى says, 'whenever a nation will enter (Jahannam), they will curse its sister nation.' (Sūrah Al-A'rāf)

The outstanding quality of the Muslim Ummah is that it is big-hearted, they acknowledge virtue, the establish justice among people, they enliven the deeds of their predecessors, and they make an abundance of Du'ā' of goodness and mercy for them. The biographies bear testimony to this.'

I excuse myself from going into such length in this regard. My objective through this note in the beginning of the book is to turn the attention of those who follow the Orientalists and adopt their ways in mentioning the senior 'Ulamā' and

The great scholar of Hadīth, Shaykh ‘Aydarūs Ibn ‘Umar Habshī ‘Alawī Hadramī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (1237-1314 A.H) says in ‘Uqūd Al-La’āl fī Asānīd Ar-Rijāl p.29, when discussing the virtue of acquiring knowledge from the ‘Ulamā’ and Mashāyikh, ‘Some of our Mashāyikh have said, “The person whom Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ favoured with any of this (meeting the Mashāyikh and acquiring knowledge) is bound to show gratitude. He must discuss his Mashāyikh and teachers, spread their virtues and merits, propagate their beneficial teachings, make Du’ā’ for them and seek the pleasure of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ for them. Doing this is of utmost importance. This is because the Shaykh and teacher gives gems and jewels to the student

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pious without any honour and respect, away from this. It seems as though these people speak in such a way that resembles them discussing small children or negligent fools who have not enlightened the world through their intelligence, knowledge, piety, and worship. Divine ability to do good is from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ.

that will be a means of eternal fortune for him. Whatever the teacher gifts to the student is much more higher than what the father gives. Therefore, the honour that must be shown to the teacher is similar to that of the father, in fact, much higher. This is because the right of the teacher or Shaykh is more and the benefit that accrues from him is eternal. Obedience to him is of a higher level and much more complete. The rights due to him are great. Hence, one must give due consideration to the rights of the Shaykh and everything linked to him. Moreover, the students must adorn themselves with these etiquettes that the 'Ulamā' have explained.'

Similarly, Imām Makkī Ibn Abū Tālib Qayrawānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in the introduction of Al-Kashf 'an Wujūh Al-Qirā'āt As-Sab', 'I hastened in writing this book out of desire that the reward continues and the benefit is conveyed. The same applies for those who acquire knowledge from it. Therefore, every honourable and righteous person who takes benefit from this book of mine, or acquired knowledge from it, is bound to make Du'ā' of mercy for the compiler and seek forgiveness for him, as he exerted his body and mind in compiling and writing the book.

I do not feel that there is any greater benefit than a person making Du'ā' of mercy for me for the effort made and difficulty undertaken in this book and other works.

Someone will seek forgiveness for me when reading it, or someone will speak good of me. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى have mercy on the person who makes Du'ā' of mercy for me, seeks forgiveness and speaks good of me.' Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says exactly the same as this Imām has said. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى reward the good doers. Āmīn

The Etiquette of the senior 'Ulamā' when mentioning the Pious

When the pious were mentioned in the gatherings of the pious scholars, they used to give due consideration to their rank and status, even if those luminaries were not present. They would sit with respect in consideration of their high position. Therefore, if we, who came much later on, cannot sit with respect when they are mentioned, then at least we must make Du'ā' of mercy for them. Subsequently, Imām Ibn Muflih Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in Al-Furū' p.195, Hāfiz Dhahabī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.1 p.213 and Hāfiz Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.1 p.130, 'Imām Abū Zur'ah Rāzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ explains, 'I was in the company of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal when a pious scholar, Ibrāhīm Ibn Tahmān رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (163 A.H) was mentioned. When he passed away, then it was said in consideration of his honour, "He has not left anyone like him after him." Imām Ahmad Ibn

Hanbal was lying down due to some pain or difficulty that he was experiencing. However, he sat up and said, "It it not appropriate for us to remain lying down when the pious are mentioned." Abul-Wafā' Ibn 'Aqīl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ explains in Al-Funūn that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was leaning. However, he sat upright and said, "It is not appropriate for us to remain leaning when the pious are mentioned."

Sitting in the Company of the Pious and Virtue of Mentioning them

Sitting in the company of the pious, listening to their talks, listening to talks about them or reading their virtues and merits bring tranquility to the hearts, clarification of matters and they correct character and deeds.

Hāfiz Qurashī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in Al-Jawāhir Al-Mudi'ah vol.1 p.3, 'A group of the pious predecessors said in the Tafsīr of the verse, 'Listen, in the remembrance of Allāh the hearts will be in comfort' (Sūrah Ar-Ra'd), that this refers to remembrance of the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. These great personalities acquire this honour because of a few reasons.

1. The greatest reason is that they saw Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
2. They acquired knowledge from him صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
3. They followed him صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in the best of ways.

There are other reasons too.[1]

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[1] Imām Ibn Hazm Zāhirī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in Al-Ihkām fī Usūl Al-Ahkām vol.5 p.89 with regards to the virtue of the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and the definition of a Sahābī, 'A Sahābī is every person who sat in the company of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, even for a moment. He heard from him صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, even if it were a sentence or two, or saw him صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ doing something and remembered it. He was not among the hypocrites and those whose hypocrisy continued and he passed away in this condition.'

All of the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ are just, leaders, outstanding and have acquired the pleasure of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. It is obligatory upon us to honour and respect them, love them and make Du'ā' of forgiveness for them. The charity of a Sahābī رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ that equals a date is more virtuous than our charity of all that we possess. One of them sitting in the company of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is more virtuous than our worship of a lifetime. If one of us were to be given eternal life and it is spent in continuous worship, then too, it can never equal the person that was in the company of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ for a single moment or more. This is because Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Leave my companions. If any of you were to spend the like of Mount Uhud in gold in the path of Allāh, it would not equal a mudd or half of that which one of them may have spent."

How valuable are these words of Ibn Hazm رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in showing the honour of the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, whereas he was from the Zāhirīs, and was not counted amongst the Sūfīs.

The 'Ulamā' are unanimous in the ruling that a person will get the title of being a Sahābī by sitting in the company of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ for even a moment, looking at him, even if it be just once glance, hearing from him, even if it be a word or a few words. This is because of the noble and high-ranking position of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Looking at the brilliant radiance of Nubuwwah has great strength in penetrating the heart of a believer. The effects of this remain for the rest of the person's life in his limbs by his obedience to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and remaining steadfast on the same.

This concept is supported by the Hadīth narrated by Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn Busr رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Glad tidings for the person who saw me and believed in me. Glad tidings for the person who saw the one who saw me. Glad tidings for the person who saw the one who saw the one who saw me and believed in me. Glad tidings for them and for them will be an excellent abode." (Tabrānī, Hākim), as quoted in Al-Jāmi' As-Saghīr commentary of At-Taysīr vol.2 p.119.

Imām Taqī-ud-Dīn Subkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Al-Ibhāj fī Sharh Al-Minhāj vol.1 p.9, 'A Sahābī is every such person who saw Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as a Muslim. This is because of the honour of being in the company of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the great nature of seeing him صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The reason is because seeing the pious has a great effect, so what can be said of seeing the leader of the pious صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ? When a Muslim is honoured by seeing him صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, even if it be for a moment, his heart will become resolute and firm. This is because of being a Muslim; the ability to accept and submit is present in his heart. Now, when he sees this great radiance, this light starts shining on him and its effect is shown on his heart and limbs.'

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'In these times, if someone is blessed with the sight of a pious person, even for a few minutes, then this sight becomes the best provision for him, which he tastes throughout his life. Whenever he recalls it, it urges him onto goodness and obedience. So, what will be the condition of seeing Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ? I have gone to great lengths in explaining the virtue of being a Sahābī because the minds and hearts have been spoilt today due to deviated thoughts. This topic has become insignificant in the minds of people today. Therefore, there was a demand for a lengthy discussion on it.

When this is the case, then the same will apply to the Tābi'īn. Therefore, the hearts will also acquire tranquility by mention of them. Similarly, the hearts will acquire peace and tranquility by at the mention of those who follow them in goodness and sincerity until the day of Qiyāmah.

The hearts of people are naturally disposed to follow the pious, tread their path, adopting their excellent ways and imitating their deeds. This is why you will see that in my annotation I have mentioned an abundance of incidents and advises from the pious, worshippers, ascetics, patient ones and the mujāhidīn. When a true believer will read them, it will move him to adopt their ways and practice the way they did. He will be encouraged to be patient and he becomes stronger in terms of religion and striving. In addition, the call to become a pious example like the predecessors will be created; a poet said beautifully, 'If you are not like the pious, then at least imitate them because there is success in imitating the pious too.'

The Desire to remain alive in the World is based on Three Reasons

According to the intelligent righteous ones, sitting in the company of the pious, listening to their biographies and

reading about their character and lives is an important objective of life. This is because the world is beloved to an intelligent person only if it is to perfect his qualities, increase his good deeds and prepare provision for the hereafter. Regarding this, Sayyidunā ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “If three things were not in the world, then I do not like to remain in it,

1. That I go out in the path of Allāh or send out an army for the same
2. The difficulty of the night, i.e. standing in worship at night in order to acquire the great reward
3. Adopting the company of such people who choose to speak pure words just like they select the best dates.”[1]

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[1] Shaykh Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says in Miftāh Dār-us-Sa’ādah p.129-130, ‘The outstanding traits, honour and virtue of knowledge: The eighth reason is that many scholars have clearly stated that after the Farā’id, the most virtuous action is to seek knowledge. The Shawāfi’ say that this is the view of Imām Shāfi’ī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. Sufyān Thaurī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said the same. The Hanafiyyah said that this is the view of Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and according to Ibn Al-Qāsim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, it is the view of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ also.

There are a number of views narrated from Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in this regard.

1. After the Farā'id, the most virtuous deed is seeking knowledge.
2. The most virtuous deed after the Farā'id is optional Salāh.
3. Jihād.

After this, Shaykh Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has written that our Shaykh (Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said, "Whichever of the three (optional Salāh, knowledge, jihād) that these Imāms classified as most virtuous, it is the same as what Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, that were it not for three things in the world, he would have liked to stay in it, i.e.

1. That I go out in the path of Allāh or send out an army for the same
2. The difficulty of the night, i.e. standing in worship at night in order to acquire the great reward
3. Adopting the company of such people who choose to speak pure words just like they select the best dates.

In essence, the first is jihād, the second is optional Salāh at night and the third is knowledge. These three were found to

The Effect is enhanced when you know who said it

No matter how brief a statement might be, I have mentioned the source and the name of the person who said it. This is because if a person knows the source of a statement, then the meaning and purport will become very clear. It will have a greater effect on the nature of the listener. The reason is that a person is aware of his religiosity, the uprightness of the person, the fame of his sincerity, his knowledge, his taqwā, and his abstinence. In short, knowledge of the person who said the statement is a means of conveying the meaning

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a perfect degree in the Sahābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. They were spread out amongst those that came later on.

I urge those who study this book, Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn, to also study the work, Safahāt min Sabr Al-'Ulamā' 'alā Shadā'id Al-'Ilm wat-Tahsīl. From this work, one will be able to gauge the virtue of knowledge, the virtue of undergoing difficulty to acquire knowledge. Love and appreciation will be created in the heart and being associated with the scholars will become beloved to a person. There is an abundance of goodness hidden in knowledge and the scholars. Strive to acquire the third edition, as it is much more beneficial than the first two editions.

and purport of his words to perfection, or, it is a part of understanding the purport perfectly.

Abū 'Amr Jāhiz says in Al-Bukhalā' p.6 about the virtue of attributing a statement to the one who said it and the ineffectiveness of not mentioning the person who said a statement, 'The perfection and beauty of some statements will not be apparent until one does not have knowledge of the one who said it. In addition, until they are not linked to the original sources. By cutting off the statement from the original source, half the beauty falls away and the rare half disappears.'

This is the reason why when you speak about asceticism and mention a new point and then you inform that it was mentioned by Bakr Ibn 'Abdullāh Muzanī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, 'Āmir Ibn Qays 'Anbarī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Muwarriq 'Ijlī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Yazīd Raqqāshī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, each one of them well known for their piety and asceticism, then this will cause the beauty of the speech to be enhanced. The blessings of it will be refreshed and it will gain an elevated status that it did not enjoy before. However, if you say regarding the same statement, 'This was mentioned by Abū Kahf Sūfī, a well known joker, or Abū Nawwās, a poet, or, Husayn Al-Khalī', a lewd talker, then it will not have this effect. In fact, it will reduce the effect and it will have no significance.

Therefore, attributing a statement to the one who said it will increase its value or degrade it. The effect of its influence will increase or decrease accordingly. This is something embedded in the hearts and natures of people.

The Reason for Interest in Choosing Stories that have an Objective

My desire is to select incidents, biographies and advises with a purposeful objective; things that the young generations are in need of at home and in society. This includes; valuable teachings, guiding thoughts and exemplary protective character traits. This is so that it can serve as an aid on journey and provision for them at home. There are many youth staying far away from home and they have every deviating distraction in front of them. The society in which he lives pushes him into running behind everything and falling into it.

There is a great need to provide nourishment of īmānī beliefs, enlighten Islāmic character traits, beautify them with good deeds whilst they live in a corrupt environment and remind them of the lives of the pious pedecessors. This is so that by the grace of Allāh, they can protect themselves from the turbulent environment. It is quite clear that a Muslim youth living in a foreign land is in need of spiritual

provision so that he can nourish himself with it morning and evening and thereby he can protect his īmānī identity from melting away in this enticing and deceptive civilization. He will be able to save himself from being polluted by the filthy traits of the residents of these countries. The character traits of the people in these places outwardly seem beautiful, but inwardly it is utterly putrid and filthy. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ will help a person as long as he remains helping his brother.

I make Du'ā' to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ to make this annotation beneficial, may He destine acceptance for it and place it in the scale of good deeds for me.

The day when Allāh will not humiliate the Nabi and the believers with him, their light will be in front of them, and on their right, they will say, 'O our Rabb, complete our light for us and forgive us, indeed you have power over everything. (Sūrah At-Tahrīm)

The day you will see the believing men and believing women, their light will be shining before them and on their right, there is glad tidings for you today of gardens beneath which rivers flow, to live there forever, that is the supreme success. (Sūrah Al-Hadīd)

والحمد لله رب العالمين وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم تسليما كثيرا

'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah

19 Jumād-al-Ūlā 1319 A.H

Beirut

Foreword: Shaykh Hasanayn Muhammad Makhlūf رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (1410 A.H)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

My brother and friend, ‘Allāmah Shaykh ‘Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah,

I received your letter containing truths and noble meaningful words. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ grant you the best of rewards and may He not deprive me of this strong link and bond. As far as the book Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn is concerned, whenever I read it, I found a new enjoyment and whenever I read your annotation to it, I find that it was placed at the necessary and appropriate place. This made the work complete and much more beneficial. All gratitude is for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ for granting this divine ability.
Together with this, a few words come to mind that I place at the beginning of the book. You are permitted to publish them if you wish.

May the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon you.

I praise Allāh that He granted you the divine ability to publish Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn of Imām Abū ‘Abdullāh Hārith Ibn Asad Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ with your valuable annotation. From this annotation, one can gauge your deep knowledge and intricate research. This has increased the beauty of the book and its benefit. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ

reward you on behalf of knowledge, the scholars and this great Imām. Hujjat-ul-Islām Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote about him, that he is the greatest scholar on social dealings in the ummah. He has surpassed everyone who has written and spoke on the defects of the carnal self, the destructive deeds and how the different forms of worship get spoilt.

Untainted Prescribed Tasawwuf

Imām Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ is in the first row of the true Sūfīs. Moreover, he has a high-ranking position in Hadīth, Fiqh and Kalām. He has written a number of works on these subjects. Most of his works are on Tasawwuf, reformation of the self, asceticism and etiquettes of the path of Sulūk. Islāmic Tasawwuf is nurturing of deeds, a treatment for the ailments of the heart, planting the seeds of virtues, removing the roots of evils, curtailing the desires of the carnal self and training one's self in patience, being pleased with the decree of Allāh and in acts of obedience.

Tasawwuf entails striving of the soul, opposing its inclinations, to take a strict account of the actions it did and those that it left out, protecting the hearts from negligence and misgivings. It curtails everything that will be a barrier in the way of a Sālik reaching Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. It refers to turning away from everything that causes a person to

become negligent of the remembrance of Allāh and causes the hearts to become attached to anything besides Him.

Tasawwuf refers to recognition of Allāh, conviction in Him, belief in Tauhīd and the greatness of Allāh. It causes a person to turn fully to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and turn away from everything else. It helps a person remain engrossed in worship and acts of obedience and to abide by the limits He has set. It aids a person to adhere to a life in accordance to the Sharī'ah and makes him eligible for the gifts and bounties that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ reserves for His friends, through His grace and bounty.

The summary is that Tasawwuf, before its codification, referred to knowledge and wisdom, foresight and guidance, nurturing and training, treatment and caution, taqwā and steadfastness, patience and striving, and fleeing from trials of the world and its allure and splendor.

Imām Abū Muhammad Jarīrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has indicated to the definition of Tasawwuf by saying, 'Tasawwuf refers to entering into pure character and staying out of every filthy character trait. In addition, Tasawwuf refers to carefully watching over one's conditions and adhering to etiquette.'

Al-Qushayrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Ar-Risālah that Adab (etiquette) encapsulates all good traits. The summary of this is; deep

understanding of Dīn, abstention from the world and recognition of the rights of Allāh.

Imām Abū Nasr Sirāj رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that there are three types of people regarding adab.

1. The people of the world. Most of their adab lies in eloquence, rhetoric, and in learning prose and poetry
2. The people of religion. Most of their adab is in exercising the soul, training the limbs and body, protecting the limits of Allāh and in abandoning the desires of the carnal self.
3. As for the Sūfīs, most of their adab is in purifying the hearts, giving due consideration to wisdom and secrets, fulfilling covenants between the servant and his Rabb, protection of time, giving very little attention to stray thoughts and adopting good ways when they ask from Allāh, present themselves before Him and at points where they are close to Him.

In short, Tasawwuf is the essence of the Sharī'ah and its soul. It is the result and fruit of the Sharī'ah. Subsequently, Junayd Baghdādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "This knowledge of ours is bound by the Qur'ān and Hadīth. Therefore, the person who does not know the Qur'ān and has not written Hadīth, he should not be followed in this matter." He also said, "All the doors have been closed to the creation, except for the one who follows in the footsteps of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ."

This branch of Shar'ī knowledge was named 'Ilm-ut-Tasawwuf or 'Ilm-ul-Haqīqat during the time when the different sciences were being codified. This is recorded by Ibn Khaldūn in his Muqaddimah. The name given to the subsidiary laws in worship and dealings was called 'Ilm-ul-Fiqh or 'Ilm-ush-Sharī'ah.

This is the reason why some Sūfīs have said in explaining the link between both sciences and their bond in nurturing the complete Muslim personality, outwardly and inwardly, "Haqīqat is useless without Sharī'ah, the Sharī'ah without Haqīqat is lifeless." It is as though both of them are like the two wings of a bird for a Muslim and one cannot do without the other.

This is pure Tasawwuf, unadulterated, without any deviation, excesses, innovation and customs. This is the Tasawwuf of the one who adheres to the limits of Allāh and the 'Ulamā' and ascetics who recognize Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. They are people like Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (110 A.H), Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (116 A.H), Dāwūd Tā'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (165 A.H), Fudayl Ibn 'Iyād رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (187 A.H) and Ma'rūf Karkhī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (201 A.H).

Among the adherents of the pure Tasawwuf are: Abū Nasr Bishr Ibn Hārith Hāfī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (227 A.H), Hārith Ibn Asad Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (243 A.H), the author of this book, Dhun-Nūn Misrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (245 A.H), Sirrī Saqatī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (258 A.H), Yahyā Ibn

Mu'ādh Rāzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (258 A.H), Ahmad Ibn 'Īsā Kharrāz رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (277 A.H), Sahl Ibn 'Abdullāh Tustarī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (283 A.H) and Junayd Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (297 A.H).

Similarly, Ruwaym Ibn Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (303 A.H), Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Sahl Ibn 'Ata رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (309 A.H), Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Jarīrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (311 A.H), 'Abdul Karīm Ibn Hawāzin Al-Qushayrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (465 A.H) and Hujjat-ul-Islām Imām Muhammad Al-Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (505 A.H).

Other noted personalities are Shaykh 'Abdul Qādir Jīlānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (561 A.H), Shaykh 'Umar Ibn Muhammad Suharwardī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (632 A.H), Imām Abul Hasan Shādhilī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (656 A.H), Shaykh Ahmad Ibn 'Umar Fursī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (686 A.H), Shaykh Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn 'Atāullāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (709 A.H), and Imām Ibn Al-Qayyim Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (751 A.H).

Similarly, Sayyed 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Alawī Haddād Hadramī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (1132 A.H), Shams-ud-Dīn Imām Muhammad Ibn Sālim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (1181 A.H), and Shaykh Abul-Barakāt Ahmad 'Adawī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ (1201 A.H).

There are countless others who were Imāms in Tasawwuf that lived in the different eras. May Allāh be pleased with them.[1]

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[1] You should point out the slips of the elders, but do not ever trample upon their personalities:

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'These great Imāms and scholars were not infallible regarding what they did and said. They were also the weak servants of Allāh, as Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'And man has been created weak'. Moreover, they were amongst those people regarding whom Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Every son of Ādam is a sinner and the best of sinners are those who repent."

A great scholar and pious man can slip in his ijtihad, or by being affected by his surroundings, by inheriting certain things from the Mashāyikh and 'Ulamā' of his time and area, or some other reason. However, due to his high-ranking position, he cannot be kept on that slip or error. Therefore, it is correct to notify him of the error, but it must be done with etiquette and respect. This is because if this person is not a Nabī or Rasūl, then he is also not an enemy of the Dīn and a person who will corrupt the Sharī'ah.

Aside from the Ambiyā', no one is of the view that others cannot commit sin or mistakes, even if it be the greatest Walī or scholar. Therefore, the sin or mistake must be

These Imāms and the scholars like them have written valuable books on striving, conditions of the soul, etiquette and character, conditions of the heart, the dangers and ailments affecting the hearts, the treatment for them and the principal and subsidiary rulings pertaining to all of these aspects. They have spoken with wisdom on treatment for the ailing heart and have laid down strong principles for it. We find a level of strictness from some Mashāyikh in their work on Sulūk. Similarly, we find differences amongst them

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criticized, no matter who did it. However, this must be done within the limits of Islāmic etiquette and Islāmic character. At the same time, the personality of the person should not be trampled and destroyed. It is only the Ambiyā' that are pure and sinless.

If a person tramples upon the personality of a person because of a sin, then it is a sign of loss and destruction. It entails veering away from the verses of the Qur'ān, 'Whoever did an atom's weight of good will see it. And whoever did an atom's weight of evil will see it.'

Therefore, the principle in this matter is that a senior person can be criticized, but with etiquette and respect. It should not be that in the name of criticism, one destroys or tramples upon his personality.

based on their knowledge, enthusiasm and recognition. Despite this, the fountainhead and source of all is the Book of Allāh and the way of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, as well as what has been narrated from the Imāms of Islām, their statements, deeds and conditions.

This is the true and correct Tasawwuf that was heard of and seen from the time that the sciences were codified. Those who adopted this way are the true Sūfīs. One of these is Sayyidunā Hārith Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ.

Innovated and Incorrect Tasawwuf

There is a false brand of Tasawwuf which was invented by a few people a long time ago. These people were deeply affected by the teachings of the Bātiniyyah and Hulūlī sects. They wore the garb of the Sūfīs. Their objective was to incline the masses to themselves, deceive them and confuse them. With the purpose of deviating the Muslims, they added their heretical teachings and filthy talks into Tasawwuf, whereas the true Sūfīs and Tasawwuf had nothing to do with them. The great 'Ulamā' and Mashāyikh that we have listed above had vehemently opposed these wretched people and stated that they were false claimants, heretics and zindīqs. There were a great number of 'Ulamā' that ripped the veil that covered their wrong thinking and

filthy insides. One of these was Hāfiz Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Shaykh Ibn Al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

Fake and Professional Tasawwuf

There were others that falsely attributed themselves to the Sūfīs and made Tasawwuf into a means of acquiring fame and seeking the wealth of the world. Generation after generation, they adopted false ways, innovations and customs that the true Sūfīs and Tasawwuf are totally free of. They claim to adhere to Tasawwuf, but they are innovators and evil doers.

However, the demand of making the truth manifest and being true to the truthful is that the true Sūfīs should not be censured because of the wrong done by the false claimants. Due the wrong, Tasawwuf itself should not be censured, but each group should be praised or censured without exaggeration and encouragement should be given where due, whilst criticism must be given its fair right too.[1]

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[1] By totally negating the ways of the false claimants, it does not necessitate that a pious person be caught up with them. 'No person will bear the burden of another.' This has been explained by Imām Ibn Munīr Iskandarī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in his annotation of Kash-shāf of Zamakhsharī vol.1 p.261

We have written at length so that the readers will know that the author of the book Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn and Sūfīs like him are amongst the true pious ones in their ways, words, knowledge and methods.

The proof of whatever I have written will be found when studying the book of Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. This book contains aspects that will nurture the souls and natures of people. In addition, whoever reads it with deep concentration and attention will be blessed with the treasure of correct knowledge. This book is further beautified with the annotation of Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ the publication and spread of this great treasure of knowledge has fallen to his lot. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ let all benefit from the book and the annotation and may He grant great reward to the authors of both. Āmīn

Hasanayn Muhammad Makhlūf
Former Grand Muftī of Egypt
3 Jumād-al-Ukhrā 1389
Cairo, Egypt

Testimony of Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

The True Sūfīs are those who follow, not those who innovate

The famous jurist and legist, Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has written a section of about ten pages in his famous and beneficial book, Al-I'tisām, in which he has mentioned the proofs absolving the true and reliable Sūfīs from the accusations of some of the ignorant and foolish people. These ignoramasus say that the true Sūfīs are innovators and deviated. Moreover, he has clearly explained that the way and method of the Sūfīs is to follow the Sunnah and stay away from everything that goes against the Sunnah. We present a few texts of this great scholar whilst adopting fairness and justice with the field of Tasawwuf. Allāh alone guides and reforms to the straight path.

Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Chapter 2, Section 4 vol.1 p.89-99, and Chapter 3, Section 7 vol.1 p.207,

The Statements of the Well-Known Sūfīs censuring Innovation and the Innovators

We have especially mentioned this topic although we have already mentioned the verses of the Qur'ān and different

Ahādīth, as well as the statements of the pious predecessors censuring innovations and the people of innovation. However, there are many ignorant people who feel about the Sūfīs that they are lazy and negligent in following the Sunnah, they have invented different forms of worship and adhere to them, whereas the Sharī'ah does not instruct us to adhere to these. They hold these made up views and practice on them.

This is not the case. This is not their belief, nor do they even say these things. This is because the basis of their ways is to follow the Sunnah and refrain from everything against the Sunnah. Subsequently, the central pillar of the methods adopted by the Sūfīs and guardian of their ways, Shaykh Abul-Qāsim Al-Qushayrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that these people adopted the name of Tasawwuf in order to separate themselves from the people of innovation.

Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has written that the most virtuous people after Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, were not referred to any other title but 'Sahābah'. This is because there is no greater virtue than this. After them, the high-ranking people were called the Tābi'īn, so this title was the noblest. Then, people were called Tab'-ut-Tābi'īn. However, after these eras, the high-ranking people in terms of Dīn were called ascetics (zāhid) and worshippers ('ābid).

He further wrote that after some time, innovations came about and every group claimed that they had ascetics and worshippers amongst them. Hence, the elite scholars of the Ahl-us-Sunnah wal Jamā'ah who guarded their souls through being mindful of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ and protected their knowledge from negligence adopted a separate name of Tasawwuf.

This is the purport of the words of Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. They made the title of Tasawwuf specific with following the Sunnah and staying away from innovation. From this we learn that the claim of the ignorant and claimants of knowledge are wrong.

If Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ helps me by granting me life, and showers His grace upon me, grants me the provision, then it is my intention to present a summary of the ways adopted by the true Sūfīs. From this, we will be able to learn the correctness of this way and its ideal nature. We will understand that wrong and innovations came into this way from those who came after the era of the pious predecessors. These innovations came into the path of Sulūk from those who did not understand the objectives; they fabricated things against the scholars of Tasawwuf, statements they did not make, to the extent that in this last era, it is considered to be a different Sharī'ah from that which Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ came with.

The most serious of these fabrications is that the true Sūfīs are lazy and negligent in following the Sunnah and they feel that the forms of worship they innovated is the correct method of worship, whereas their ways are totally free from this.

Fudayl Ibn ʻIyādh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "He who sits in the company of an innovator will not be given wisdom." Dhun-Nūn Misrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Corruption amongst people is on account of six things. The fifth of these is that they followed their whims and desires and abandoned the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The sixth is that they adopted the mistakes of the past people as proof whilst burying all their virtues and merits." Yahyā Ibn Mu'ādh Rāzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "All the differences of the people are based on three things. There is an opposite to each of the three. If one of them falls away, he engages in the opposite. Tauhīd, the opposite is polytheism. Sunnah, the opposite is innovation (Bid'ah). Obedience, the opposite is sin."

Abū ʻAlī Hasan Ibn ʻAlī Jauzjānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The signs of good fortune of a person are: obedience has been made easy for him. His actions are in accordance to the Sunnah. He has access to the company of the pious. He adopts good character with his brothers. He treats the creation well. He has a well-wishing nature for the Muslims and he protects his time." He was asked, "What is the path to reach Allāh?"

He said, “There are many paths to reach Allāh. However, the clearest one, the one that is the most protected from doubt is to follow the Sunnah in word, deed, determintation and intention.” It was said, “What is the path of the Sunnah?” He said, “Abstention from innovation, following the consensus of the ‘Ulamā’ from the first century and holding firmly onto following and emulation.”

Abul Hasan Warrāq رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “Truthfulness means to remain steadfast on the straight path and to follow the Sunnah in matters of the Sharī’ah.” He also said, “The sign of love for Allāh is to follow His beloved صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.” The student of Junayd Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Shaykh Abū Bakr Ibn Sa’dān رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “Holding firmly onto the commands of Allāh entails staying far away from negligence, sin, innovation and deviation.”

Abū ‘Umar Zujājī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, another student of Junayd Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Sufyān Thaurī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “During the era of ignorance, the people used to do that which their intellects and natures felt was good. However, when Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ came, he brought the people onto the Sharī’ah and following the Sharī’ah. This is because whatever is good in the Sharī’ah, a sound intellect will also take it to be good, and whatever is wrong and bad, a sound intellect will also take it to be good and excellent.” Abū Yazīd Bustāmī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “I spent thirty years in striving. However, I did not find

anything more difficult than knowledge and following it. If there were no differences amongst the 'Ulamā', I would have fallen into difficulty. There are differences amongst the 'Ulamā' in every matter aside from the matter of restricting the meaning of Tauhīd. Following knowledge, in reality, is following the Sunnah."

He also said, "Get up and come with us. We want to go and see the person who has made himself famous as a Walī." The narrator says, "We went along. When that person left his house and entered the Masjid, he spat in the direction of the Qiblah. Abū Yazīd Bustāmī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ immediately returned and did not even greet him with Salām. He said, "This person is not honourable and reliable with one etiquette of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, how can we rely on his claim of being a Walī?"[1]

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[1] Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "Spitting in the Masjid is a sin, the expiation of it is to bury it." Bukārī vol.1 p.428, Muslim vol.5 p.41

Imām Bukhārī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ transmits a narration from Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, "When any of you stand up for Salāh, he should not spit in front of him because he is conversing with Allāh as long as he is in Salāh, nor to his right, as there is an angel there. He should rather spit to the left or beneath his foot and then bury it." Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ also narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ once saw phlegm on the

He also said, “If you see a person who does miracles, even if he flies in the air, then too, do not be deceived by him, until you do not see that he adheres to the commands, stays away from the prohibitions and adopts the etiquette of the Sharī’ah.”

Sahl Tustarī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “Seven things are our principles. Holding firmly onto the book of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, following the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, consuming Halāl food...” He was asked about the noble nature of a person. He said, “It entails following the Sunnah.” Abū Sulaymān Dārānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “An intricate point that comes from the true Sūfīs remains in my heart for a few days. However, I do not accept it until I do not get two just witnesses for it, i.e. the Noble Qur’ān and the Hadīth.” Shaykh Ahmad Ibn Abīl-Huwārā رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “He who does an action without following the Sunnah, his deed will be null and void.”

Junayd Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “All paths upon the creation are closed except he who follows in the footsteps of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.” He also said, “He who did not learn the Qur’ān and has not written the Ahādīth, he should not be followed

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wall in the direction of the Qiblah. He rubbed it off. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ disliked this and was strict in the matters of cleanliness.

in the path of Sulūk because this knowledge and path of ours is restricted to the Qur'ān and Hadīth."

Shaykh Abū 'Uthmān Hīrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "He who takes the Sunnah as the ruler over his statements and deeds will speak with wisdom. He who takes his desires as the ruler over himself will speak innovation. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'If you follow him, i.e. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, you will be guided'."

Shaykh Abul-Husayn Nūrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "If you see anyone claiming to be the friend of Allāh and you see him doing things that are against the Sharī'ah, then do not even go near him." Abul-Qāsim Nasrābādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The foundation of Tasawwuf is to adhere to the Qur'ān and Sunnah, to stay away from innovation and customs, to leave ones whims, to honour the Mashāyikh, to consider the excuse offered by the creation, to adhere to the Adhkār and Awrād and to leave aside concessions and far-fetched interpretations.

There are many statements of the Mashāyikh in this regard. I have mentioned some of the famous ones, covering forty luminaries. All of them have stated, explicitly or implicitly, that innovation is deviation. Treading the path of innovation is a calamity and practicing on innovation is swimming in darkness. Moreover, an innovator hands himself over to his carnal self, he will be deprived of wisdom and will remain

unprotected. As for the true Sūfīs, to whom the path is attributed, they all agree upon the honour for the Sharī'ah and upon remaining steadfast in following the Sunnah. They do not fall short in fulfilling the etiquette of the Sunnah and stay far away from innovation and the people of innovation. This is the reason why none of them were linked to any of the deviated groups, nor were they inclined to go against the Sunnah. Most of the people I have mentioned above were 'Ulamā', jurists, and Muhaddithīn. They were such people from whom we could acquire knowledge of the principles and subsidiary matters of Dīn. If there was anyone of them not of this level, then at the very least, he has knowledge of a sufficient degree for himself and his religious needs.

These people were scholars of the realities, people of enthusiasm and experienced the different states and were acquainted with the secrets that come from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. Therefore, they are against every such person who attributes himself to this path, but does not practice on their way. Those people who adopt innovation and follows his whims. This is the greatest proof for us. Such a person attributes these innovations and concoctions to a statement or deed of the Sūfīs that could have other possible meanings, an action that came from them due to circumstances, or an expediency that the Sharī'ah has now declared invalid, or something similar.

Subsequently, there were many amongst the latter day scholars that adopted the garb of the Sūfīs and have been doing such things that are wrong in the light of the Sharī'ah and everyone agrees upon its wrong nature. These people draw proof from such incidents which have come about due to circumstances or situational demands. If these incidents are correct, then too, they cannot be used as proof due to a number of reasons. On the other hand, they overlook the advises and conditions of those people that are clear in its truth and explicit in following that which is correct. The condition of these people is like those who follow the vague proofs of the Sharī'ah (mutashābihāt) and leave aside the clear proofs.

As for discussing the intricate and deep points of Tasawwuf, this is not an outright innovation, nor is it something established upon clear authentic proofs. They are of two types. Firstly, it is necessary to explain the word 'Tasawwuf' here so that judgement can be passed on something that is understood properly. This is because Tasawwuf is something vague according to the latter day scholars. So, we must return to the statements of the early day scholars. The summary of the statements from the early day scholars are two:

1. To adorn ones self with every good character trait and purify ones self from every filthy character trait.

2. Annihilating ones self and keeping ones self devoted to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى.

In reality, the summary of both are the same. Yes, one can be referred to as the starting point and the other can be referred to as the end point. Both define Tasawwuf. Despite this, in terms of the first meaning, a condition is not necessitated, whereas it is necessitated from the second meaning. They can be expressed in a different way, the first is an action takes upon himself and the second is the result. From the first meaning, a person becomes adorned outwardly, and with the second, inwardly. The outer and inner together is Tasawwuf.

When this has been proven, we learn that in terms of the first meaning, it is not innovation to speak about Tasawwuf. This is because the source of it is deeper understanding. Action is based on this. This is correct understanding. The basis of this is clear in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. This cannot be said to be innovation. Yes, if the subsidiary rulings in Fiqh whose like was not found amongst the pious predecessors can be called innovation, like forward buying, rentals, the rulings of Sahwa in Salāh, retraction of testimony and so on, then the knowledge of Tasawwuf can be referred to as innovation. No matter how deep these subdiary rulings go, the 'Ulamā' did not refer to them as innovations. Similarly, the outer and inner aspects of

character cannot be referred to as innovation because they are all based on Shar'ī principles.

After this, Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ then goes into a lengthy discussion and explains the four angles in the light of the second meaning. He states which one is innovation and which is not. This detail has been left out here for sake of brevity. This can be studied in the original work.

The discussion of Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ is quite clear in the praise of proper Tasawwuf and the true Sūfīs. After this discussion of the high ranking Imām and jurist, it does not behoove an intelligent scholar to disparage Tasawwuf and the Sūfīs, but that group which contradicts the Qur'ān, Sunnah and ways of the pious predecessors in word or deed will be worthy of censure.

The true Sūfīs were praised not only by Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, nor was he the first to do so. There were a number of great Imāms before him that lauded Tasawwuf. Subsequently, Ibn Al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Madārij-us-Sālikīn vol.3 p.129 writes, 'Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'I stayed in the company of the pious. I learnt two beneficial things. The Sūfīs used to say that time is a sword, you cut it, otherwise, it will cut you. Also, if you do not keep yourself occupied with the truth, it will engage you in falsehood."

Shaykh ‘Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, ‘How beautiful are these words, how beneficial and how comprehensive. The one who said them is a high-ranking person. This statement of Imām Shāfi’ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ is sufficient to show the excellency of a certain group.’

Preface to the First Edition

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله ولى كل خير وهداية والصلاة والسلام على سيدنا محمد الداعي إلى أفضل طريق وغاية ، ورضي الله عن أصحابه مصابيح الهدى والدين وتابعيهم السالكين نهجهم القويم باحسان ، أما بعد ،

The greatest need that people of this time have is to pay attention to the soul, understand Dīn and practice on it. The pious predecessors had seen to this, which is why their society was pure, their way of life was correct, goodness was overpowering amongst them. In addition, they earned and acquired an abundance in this world, as well as for the hereafter.

These pious predecessors left behind the footpath of goodness and knowledge for those who came after. This serves as a signpost for those who have lost their way and help bring them back onto the straight path. Subsequently, they wrote many books in terms of encouragement and warning, virtues and warnings, purification and reformation of the soul. They left behind so many compilations and writings and have admonished and notified to the extent that it is as though they did not leave anything for those who came later to do.

Amongst the works that the pious predecessors left for those who came later are those of the well known ascetic, jurist, Muhaddith, advisor, noble, and caller to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, Imām Abū 'Abdullāh Hārith Ibn Asad Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

Together with a high level of taqwa, Imām Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had deep sincerity, an illuminated heart and his tongue translated the realities. Although the words 'taqwa' and 'fear of Allāh' are easily said, but the heart of Imām Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was very broad. His heart was empty of the world, as though he was fully convinced that there were just a few moments between him and his grave. This is the reason why when they speak and advise, it seems as though they are witnessing Jannah and its comforts and they are seeing Jahannam and the fire right in front of them. Mālik Ibn Dīnar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "If I get a helper, then I will spread this call in the whole world, 'People, save yourselves from the fire, people, save yourselves from the fire.'"

In some books, Imām Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ went into such detail that he left no scope for anyone to add to it. However, in some books, he used a brief approach relying upon the sincere seeker of guidance.

Subsequently, in Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn, he wrote deep advice, beautiful guidance, clear notifications, warnings,

explanations, teachings, and filled his brief sentences with knowledge and comprehensive meaning. This work can be read and understood in a short space of time. Despite this, the person who reads each sentence with concentration and a free mind will benefit fully from it, just as a person reads a text repeatedly to memorise it.

I had this booklet in my possession in manuscript form. I had acquired it a number of years ago. When I read it carefully, I found it to be full of guidance for the seeker of goodness and very comprehensive. Therefore, I decided to publish it so that people could benefit from the sincerity, piety and knowledge in the advice of this author رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

The hand written manuscript that I had acquired had a clear text and the words could easily be understood. There were hardly mistakes. There were signs made on it that showed the correction of a word here and there. It was thirty three pages. However, the manuscript was not dated. It seemed as though it was written during these last few years, probably after the first millennium. The name of the scribe was also missing. On the third page, I found indication that made up the sentence, 'Ahmad Ibn Al-Hāj Ismā'īl wrote it'. I came to know that the Ma'had Makhtūtāt 'Arabiyyah in Cairo had a copy of this book from Maktabah Al-Baladiyyah of Alexandria. Therefore, I took a photo of it. This copy was fourteen pages in the Marrakech script. There was no date

on this copy, nor was the name of the scribe added. In the list of books at Ma'had Makhtūtāt 'Arabiyyah, it was clearly written that it was copied in the twelfth Christian century. With the help of Shaykh 'Abdus Sattār Abū Ghuddah, I compared the two very meticulously and this helped me to complete and correct a number of sentences.

I added an annotation to the work to add to its benefit and clarify it. I added the references to Qur'ānic verses, and did a research of the Ahādīth. I added the biography of the author so that we could gauge his lofty rank as the publishers of his books had fallen short in this regard previously. I dedicate this work to my brother who passed away in his youth, when he did not yet reach the age of twenty.

O Allāh, give him recompense in Jannah, give us and him an end of goodness, bless my work with acceptance, make it solely for Your pleasure so that it could be of benefit to me on the day when I stand before You. 'The day when wealth and children will be of no benefit, except to the one who comes with a clear heart.'

'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah
Aleppo, Syria
1 Jumād-al-Ūlā 1384

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Abū ‘Abdullāh Hārith Ibn Asad Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says,
All praise is for Allāh, the First, the Eternal, the One, the Great, there is nothing similar to Him and there is nothing comparable to Him. I praise Him with praise equal to His bounties and that will reach the extent of His favours.

I bear testimony that there is none worthy of worship but Allāh, He is Alone, He has no partner, the testimony of a person who recognizes His status as the Rabb and someone who knows of His Oneness. I testify that Muhammad صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is His servant and Rasūl, He selected him for His revelation and sealed the chain of prophethood with him. He made him a proof over the entire creation, ‘so that whoever was to be destroyed, will be destroyed after clear proof, and whoever was to survive, he will live after clear evidence. Allāh Hears, Knows.’[1]

To proceed, you must know that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ chose from His believing servants, people of intelligence, those who know Him and matters about Him. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ describes them with faithfulness, possessing virtuous character, and fear for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says,

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[1] Sūrah Al-Anfāl:42

إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُوْلُواْ الأَلْبَابِ ۞ الَّذِينَ يُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللّه وَلاَ يِنقُضُونَ الْمِيثَاقَ ۞ وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللُّه بِهِ أَن يُوصَلَ وَيَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوءَ الحِسَابِ

Only the intelligent heed the advice. Those who fulfil the promise with Allāh and they do not break it. Those who join that which Allāh commands to be joined and they fear their Rabb and they fear a bad reckoning.[1]

The person whose bosom Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ has opened for īmān and verification of it has reached his heart, and he is inclined to acquire closeness to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, then it is binding upon him to adopt the nature of the intelligent. This means that he has to hold onto the book of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٰٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ and whatever is agreed upon by the Imāms. This is the straight path to which Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ calls His servants. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says,

وَأَنَّ هَـذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلاَ تَتَّبِعُواْ السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

And (Allāh commanded that) this is My straight path, so follow it, and do not follow other paths, it will take you away from His way, Allāh has enjoined these things on you so that you can fear Him. (Sūrah Al-An'ām:153)

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[1] Sūrah Ar-Ra'd:19-21

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Hold onto my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafā' after me. Hold onto firmly with your teeth."[1]

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[1] This is a part of a Hadīth narrated by Sayyidunā 'Irbādh Ibn Sāriyah As-Sulamī رضي الله عنه. It is found in Musnad Ahmad vol.4 p. 126, 127, Sunan Abū Dāwūd vol.4 p.201, Sunan Tirmidhī vol.10 p.143. Tirmidhī said that the Hadīth is Hasan Sahīh. Also in Ibn Mājah vol.1 p.15 and Imām Nawawī رحمه الله has included it in his Arba'īn, Hadīth 28.

The complete Hadīth must be studied for full clarity. Sayyidunā 'Irbādh Ibn Sāriyah رضي الله عنه narrates that one day Rasūlullāh ﷺ led us in Fajr Salāh. He then turned to us and addressed us very eloquently, the eyes were tearing and the hearts trembled. Someone asked, "O Rasūl of Allāh, it seems as though these are parting advices. So what do require that we pledge to?" Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I advise you to fear Allāh, to listen and obey, even if an Abyssinian slave is appointed over you. Whoever lives on after me will witness differences. So, hold onto my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafā' after me. Hold onto it firmly with your teeth. Stay away from inventing new things, as every new thing is innovation (bid'ah) and every innovation (bid'ah) is deviation."

Know well that the duty of the Book of Allāh is to practice on its commands and stay from whatever it prohibits. One must fear its warnings, have hope in its promises, believe the Mutashābih (vague) verses, and take lesson from the incidents and examples it mentions. When you will do this, then you will come out of the darkness of ignorance and reach the light of knowledge, you will be saved from the restriction and punishment of doubt and will be relieved by comfort. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says,

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

Allāh is the protector of the believers, He takes them out of darkness into light (Sūrah Al-Baqarah:257)[1]

Nawājidh (Teeth): This refers to the last few teeth at the back of the mouth. This means that one should onto the Sunnah firmly and practice on it resolutely. One must strive for this like a person holding onto something using his teeth so that it does not slip.

[1] According to the early day scholars, it is not necessary to have a link with a Shaykh for the reformation of the carnal self:

The words of Imām Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ show that finding guidance from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, reforming the carnal self and purifying it is not bound to and suspended upon pledging allegiance to a Shaykh. Rather, it is dependent upon holding

on firmly to this knowledge that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ commanded and one practically implements it. This includes the Noble Qur'ān, the Sunnah and the ways of the pious predecessors. Therefore, every person who seeks the straight path, if he will practice on the Noble Qur'ān, Sunnah of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٰٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ, lives of the rightly guided Khulafā' and ways of the pious predecessors, he will be treading on the straight path. He has turned to Allāh as a guided person. This is because the Noble Qur'ān and Sunnah guides towards Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ on their own. In addition, they are the best means of reforming and purifying the soul and carnal self. There are many verses of the Qur'ān and Ahādīth in this regard. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says,

إِنَّ هَـٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ يِهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا

Indeed this Qur'ān shows the path to those who are straight and it gives glad tidings to the believers who do good deeds, that they will have a great recompense (Sūrah Al-Isrā':9)

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

If We had to reveal the Qur'ān upon a mountain, you would see it humble itself and split out of the fear of Allāh, We explain these examples to people so that they may think (Sūrah Al-Hashr: 21)

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

He is the One who sent the unlettered Rasūl from amongst them, reciting the verses before them, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom, when they were in clear deviation before this (Sūrah Al-Jumu'ah:2)

The rectification and purification of the people will always continue through the actions, statements and approvals of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The statements, actions and approvals of Rasūlullāh ﷺ served as a guide and teacher before and they hold the same position even now. All praise is for Allāh, they are compiled and protected until today. One of his ﷺ statements is the one quoted by the author, "Hold onto my Sunnah…" and "I have two things amongst you. You will never go astray after them. The Book of Allāh and My Sunnah." Rasūlullāh ﷺ also said, "He who turns away from my Sunnah, he is not of me."

Therefore, some people say that the person who feels that he can cure the illnesses of the carnal self himself through the recitation of the Noble Qur'ān and by studying the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he is in error, because even the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم could not treat themselves only by means of the Qur'ān, is incorrect. This statement is a clear

accusation against Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ and renders the words of Allāh سُبۡحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ useless and void. We seek the protection of Allāh from retrogression after progression and from deviation after guidance.

The Question of Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ to Ibn 'Abbād Nafazī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ about a Shaykh in Tarbiyah (Nurturing and Reformation) and a Shaykh engaged in Knowledge:

Imām Ibrāhīm Ibn Mūsā Ash-Shātbī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ (790 A.H) is the author of Al-Muwāfaqāt and Al-I'tisām. He authored other valuable works also. He posed a question to a great Shaykh of Grenada, Shaykh Abū 'Abdullāh Muhammad Ibn 'Abbād An-Nafazī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ. He said, 'A certain matter has become the subject of discussion in Grenada. The 'Ulamā' have different opinions in this regard. The matter is that is it necessary upon the Sālik to adopt a Shaykh-e-Tarīqat and traverse the path of Sulūk under his guidance? Or, is it possible for him to benefit from the scholars without adopting a Shaykh-e-Tarīqat and tread the path of Sulūk?

The summary of the reply of Shaykh Ibn 'Abbād رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ is, 'Whichever Shaykh a person turns to in the path of Sulūk, they are of two types. One is a Shaykh of Ta'līm and Tarbiyat. The second is the Shaykh of Ta'līm only. A Shaykh

of Tarbiyat is not necessary for every Sālik , but he is only needed by the Sālik who is foolish and has a rebellious carnal self. The Sālik who is intelligent and has a submissive carnal self, he will not need a Shaykh-e-Tarīqat. It will be better if he has a Shaykh. As for a Shaykh-e-Ta'līm, no one can do without him.

A Shaykh-e-Tarbiyat that has been declared necessary for the Sālikīn, the reason for this is clear. It is because the veils over the carnal self are very dense. None but a Shaykh-e-Tarīqat can remove them. These Sālikīn are like patients who have illnesses over a long period of time. They are in need of these physicians to treat the illnesses with strong medication.

As for the Sālik who is intelligent and has a submissive carnal self, he does not need a Shaykh-e-Tarbiyat in the same way because his intelligence and submissive self make him independent of the Shaykh-e-Tarbiyat. This is because as the Sālik will practice on the guidance of the Shaykh-e-Ta'līm, others will not be able to do the same. By the grace of Allāh, he will reach his goal. He has no fear of harm on the path of Sulūk on condition that his objective is Sulūk and he treads the path correctly.

Taking the support of a Shaykh-e-Tarbiyat is the practice of the latter days Sūfīs, whilst relying upon a Shaykh-e-Ta'līm was the way of the early day scholars. This is clear from many writings of Hārith Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Abū Tālib Makkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. This is because these authors did not throw light on Shaykh-e-Tarbiyat in their books like the latter day Sūfīs did, whereas they have, and especially Abū Tālib رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has made the principles and subsidiary aspects of Tasawwuf and its past and present the subject of discussion. This is a great proof that it is not conditional to stipulate a Shaykh in the path of Sulūk, and this is the way adopted by most of the Sālikīn. This is also in harmony with the way of the pious predecessors. This is because it is not narrated from them that they stipulated a Shaykh-e-Tarbiyat, linked to him and adhered to him in the way that the later Murīdīn adhered and held onto their Shuyūkh. In fact, their condition was such that they learnt and reformed themselves in the company of each other and they acquired a state and condition by meeting and visiting whose effect they felt inwardly and outwardly. Looking at this, they visited different places and met with the pious and scholars.

With regards to the books of the Sūfīs, they had to finally turn to a Shaykh-e-Ta'līm. This is because for the sake of taking benefit from books, it is necessary for the author to

Indeed, those who have been given intelligence and understanding from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ and they incline to them, they differentiate. They are the people who gave due importance to reforming their outer condition and protect themselves from doubtful things.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "The Halāl is clear and Harām is clear. There are some things between them that are doubtful."[1]

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be a person of knowledge and recognition and it will be correct to follow him. This verification of the credentials of the scholar can only be acquired from a reliable Shaykh. Therefore, if the subject matter of the book is in harmony with the Sharī'ah, then well and good, otherwise, it will be necessary to turn to a Shaykh-e-Ta'līm to clarify matters. In short, there is no way out but to turn to a Shaykh-e-Ta'līm.

These words of Ibn 'Abbād رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ show that stipulating a Shaykh-e-Tarbiyat and keeping a link of Bay'ah is not necessary whilst it is necessary to have a link and connection with a Shaykh-e-Ta'līm.

[1] Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "The ignorant people think that Halāl wealth is totally absent or non-existent, and the paths to acquire Halāl wealth are closed. It is as though aside from the water of the Euphrates and grass growing on

uncultivated land are the only Halāl and pure things in this world. The rest of the things have been spoilt at the hands of the oppressors and due to corrupt dealings. This thought is incorrect. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "The Halāl is clear and the Harām is clear. Between them there are doubtful things." All three will always exist, no matter how much the conditions change. Whatever, what is missing is knowledge of that which is Halāl and the way of reaching that Halāl." (Ihyā'-ul-'Ulūm vol.5 p.20, Fayd-ul-Qadīr vol.3 p.424, 425)

All three are present. However, the Harām is sometimes less, sometimes more. However, a decrease in Fiqh in our time, weakness in Dīn and the spread of interest-bearing dealings and an abundance of impermissible dealings has caused an increase in Harām wealth. We seek the help of Allāh.

The Spread of Harām Wealth does not necessitate that one Abandons Trade and Eating

Despite this, Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says, 'He who knows that Harām has become mixed in the wealth of the world, yet it will not be necessary that he abandons trade and eating because the people will fall into difficulty. In the time of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, an item was stolen and someone was

When this is the case, then it is better to stay away from the doubtful.[1]

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dishonest regarding the booty, a shawl was stolen. Despite this, the people continued with the trade of these items.

A person will be able to save himself from Harām wealth completely in the world when the entire creation becomes Ma'sūm. This is impossible. In the world, this condition has not been put anywhere, nor has such restrictions been placed in any city, except if there are some secluded people who adopted this type of abstinence. This type of action is not reported from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ or any Sahābī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and one cannot think about it for any era. See the book Risālah Al-Halāl wal-Harām of Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ for further detail on this.

[1] This is a portion of a Haīth transmitted by Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Bukhārī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Muslim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Abū Dāwūd رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Nasā'ī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Tirmidhī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Ibn Mājah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Dārimī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and others. Sayyidunā Nu'mān Ibn Bashīr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated it. The words mentioned here are those of Tirmidhī. In this narration, we apparently learn the sentence, 'Leaving it is better than taking it' to be part of the Hadīth. However, I searched but could not find it. Therefore, I mentioned it afterwards. And Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى knows best.

An Abundance of Mubāh is a means for Makrūh and an Abundance of Makrūh is a means for Abundance of Harām

'Allāmah Zayn-ud-Dīn Ibn Al-Munīr رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in the commentary of the narration of Bukhārī, 'Whoever falls into doubtful, he will fall into Harām', Abul-Qāsim Ibn Mansūr Al-Qabbārī Al-Iskandarī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to say, 'Mubāh (permitted) things) is a valley between a person and Makrūh. The person who does an abundance of Mubāh, he will reach Makrūh, and Makrūh is a valley between a person and Harām. So, whoever does an abundance of Makrūh, he will reach Harām.' Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentions this statement in Fath-ul-Bārī vol.1 p.118, and then says, 'This is a good thought. This is supported by a narration of Ibn Hibbān رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, whose chain of narration is mentioned by Muslim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. However, the words are not mentioned. The following are the additional words of the narration (اجعلوا بينكم وبين الحرام شترة من الحلال من فعل ذلك استبرأ لعرضه ودينه ومن ارتع فيه كان كالمرتع الى جنب الحمى يوشك ان يقع فيه). Then Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'The meaning of the Hadīth is that if there is something Halāl that will end in Makrūh, or take a person to Harām, then it is necessary to stay away from it. For example, an abundant use of nice things. This is because it calls a person towards earning more and earning more throws a person into those things that a person is not worthy of, or it creates laziness in a

person. The least harm that it will cause a person is that there will be a decrease in opportunities to display one's servitude. We learn this from witnessing it and seeing the ways and habits of the people. There is a difference in the habits of people. It cannot remain a hidden matter for a scholar of understanding. He can differentiate in the ruling. As for those besides him, he could fall into doubt depending on the circumstances.

It is no hidden matter that a person who does an abundance of Makrūh, he will be bold in committing those things that are forbidden. Alternatively, doing non-Harām forbidden things will take a person towards Harām forbidden things, when they could be a cause of doubt. Therefore, the person who does forbidden things, his heart will become dark because of the absence of the light of Taqwā. Therefore, this person will engage in Harām, whereas he did not even have the intention to enter into it.

A Few Examples of the Abstention of the Early Day Scholars

'Allāmah Qastallānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in his commentary of Sahīh Bukhārī vol.1 p.191, 'By Allāh, as long as you do not have conviction that something is Halāl, leave it, just as Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ left out a date due to it being doubtful, as it could have been from Sadaqah. The highest level of

abstinence is for a person to leave out Halāl out of fear for falling into Harām. An example of this is Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ leaving out his wage because he had the doubt that he did not fulfil the work completely. In doing this, he had to experience great hunger.

The sister of Bishr Hāfī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ asked Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, "We spin cotton on the roofs of our home. The torches of the Tāhiriyyah attendants pass by there and the light reaches us. We spin cotton in the light of these torches and candles; will it permitted for us to do this and to weave clothing from it?" Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbāl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ asked, "May Allāh bless you with safety. Who are you?" She replied, "I am the sister of Bishr Hāfī." Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ cried and said, "Pure tawā and abstinence comes out of your homes, now do not do this work in that light."

In our times (10th Hijrī century), Sayyidah Badī'ah Ijiyyah lived in Makkah Mukarramah for thirty years. However, she did not eat any meat or fruit that came from the market of Bajīlah, because she got information that the people of Bajīlah do not give the share of inheritance to their daughters. Her father, Nūr-ud-Dīn, abstained from eating the dates of Madīnah Munawwarah after he heard that the people there were not giving the Zakāt. The person who

practices on the concessions, will regret and the person who is pious and abstinent will cross the Sirāt quickly.

Khatīb Baghdādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in the biography of Hafiz Ibn 'Uqdah (Tārīkh Baghdad vol.5 p.51) that his father, Muhammad Ibn Sa'īd 'Uqdah was a very pious and abstinent person. Some of his money fell at the entrance of the house of Abū Dharr Khazzāz. He brought a person to look for the Dīnārs. 'Uqdah says, "I found the gold coins, but I thought and said to myself, "Are you the only one who owns Dīnārs in the world? It could belong to someone else." I said to the person who came to search for the Dīnārs, "These are now your responsibility. I continued on my way and left the money."

Something similar happened with Imām Abū Ishāq Shirāzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, a leading Shāfi'ī scholar and the author of Al-Muhadh-dhab. He lived a difficult and harsh life due to need and poverty. Together with this, he was an extremely abstinent and pious person. He came to the Masjid in order to eat something. He remembered on the way that he forgot a Dīnār in the Masjid. He returned to the Masjid. He found it, but left it. He did not even touch it. He said to himself, "It probably fell from someone else and it does not belong to me." (Tahdhīb-ul-Asmā' vol.2 p.173) Study the Chapter on Wara' in Risālah Qushayriyyah. You will learn of unique

Weigh and check your intention[1] and study your resolve. Acquire recognition of Allāh because the basis of recompense is intention.[2]

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incidents. Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote Kitāb-ul-Wara'. It is a very valuable book. It has many unique incidents of the pious predecessors. The reader will feel that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has entered Jannah and he is explaining the character of the people there. Study this book, you will definitely get great benefit.

[1] The word niyyah refers to the heart intending to do something or not to do it. Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said in I'lām ul Muwaqqa'īn vol.4 p.199, "Niyyah is the root of every matter. It is the basis on which the building of the deed is built. It is the soul of the deed and it steers it. Every action follows it and is based on it. A deed will be correct if the niyyah is correct and it will be incorrect if the niyyah is incorrect. A person acquires divine inspiration through it. If it is absent, a person will be in loss. Based on niyyah, the stages of people will differ in the hereafter."

[2] The Virtue of Good Intentions and the Calamity of an Evil Intention:

This is a great bounty of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ upon the Muslim servants. This is because when Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ rewards a person for his intention and grants reward, then he will

increase in goodness and good deeds, through which Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى will be pleased. By means of this, he can acquire reward for good deeds that he did not yet do. It is only because of his intention. If he has the ability, then he will do the deed also.

For this reason, we find the pious predecessors like Abū Safwān رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, who said, "No body is too weak to form an intention, i.e. every person can make a good intention." (Hilyah of Abū Nu'aym vol.7 p.54)

'Abdullāh Ibn Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "One day I said to my father, "O my father, give me some advice." He replied, "O my beloved son, form good intentions, you will always experience goodness as long as you intend to do good." (Manāqib Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ p.200)

Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Abdur Tahmān Ibn Yazīd Nakha'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, one of the Tābi'īn, who not do any action without making an intention. He adhered to this to the extent that he would drink water after making an intention. (Al-'Ilal wa Ma'rafit Ar-Rijāl vol.1 p.73)

The same will apply to an evil intention. The person who makes an evil intention will be taken to task for it and he will have to face the punishment for intending to carry out that evil action, even if he does not do the evil that he

Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ said, "Actions are based on their intentions and every person will get that which he intended."[1]

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resolved to carry out. This will apply if he left it out for some being or reason other than Allāh سُبۡحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ like he was unable, or he could not do it. Therefore, you should make your intention solely for Allāh سُبۡحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and create purity in the heart and acquire reward from your Rabb.

[1] This part of the Hadīth is recorded by Bukhārī and Muslim

The Pious Predecessors would be conscious of their Intention before the Deed

Many statements of the pious predecessors speak about keeping a pure and sincere intention and keeping one's intentions pure from anything else. Yūsuf Ibn Asbāt رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ said, "Purifying one's intention from other things is more difficult for those doing deeds in comparison to those striving." Sufyān Thaurī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ said,"I have not found anything more severe than correcting my intention. This is because intentions change." Nāfi' Ibn Jubayr رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ was asked, "You do not participate in the Janāzah Salāh?" he said, "Wait until I form an intention." He thought for a little while and said, "Yes, com let us go." (Jāmi' Al-'Ulūm wal Hikam p.9)

Hold onto Taqwā of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى because a true Muslim is he from whose hands and tongue other Muslims are safe, and a true believer is he from whose evils others are safe.[1] Sayyidunā Abū Bakr As-Siddīq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "Fear Allāh by obedience to Him, obey Allāh by taqwā of Him, restrain your hands from the blood of the Muslims, your stomach from their wealth, your tongue from their honour, take account of yourself at every moment and ponder over Allāh at every breath."[2]

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[1] Bawā'iq is the plural of Bā'iqah. It means difficulty and trouble. This narration is narrated by Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The words of the Hadīth according to Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Nasā'ī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Tirmidhī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Hākim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Ibn Hibbān رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ are, 'A true Muslim is he from whose hands and tongue other Muslims are safe and a true Mu'min is he from whom the people are safe in terms of their blood and wealth." The commentator, Munāwī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, says that there are additional words in Hākim, 'A true Mujāhid is he who strives in the obedience of Allāh and an emigrant is he who leaves and abandons sin and disobedience."

[2] The Names & Categories of Thoughts:

Shaykh Abū Tālib Makkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in Qūt-ul-Qulūb, 'The detail and division of the different types of thoughts. Thoughts are as follows,

1. The thought in the heart to do good. This is called Ilhām
2. The thought in the heart to do an evil deed. This is called waswās
3. The thought in the heart about fearful matters. This is called Ihsās
4. To form an intention in the heart to do something good. This is called Niyyah
5. The plan to do something permissible, giving preference to it. This is called Umniyyah
6. Remembrance of the hereafter and warnings and promises. This is called Tadhakkur and Tafkīr
7. Seeing matters of the Ghayb with certain conviction is called Mushāhadah
8. To think about the subsistence of the soul and knowing its conditions. This is called Hamm
9. The thoughts regarding one's habits and the pull of one's desires is called Lamam

All these are referred to as Khawātir.

An Excellent Explanation of Khawātir by Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

'Allāmah Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has written excellent and deep points on thoughts (Khawātir). You should ponder over them. There is a need to understand and learn them. Despite the length of it, I am presenting it here, with hope that you will reflect over them. There is goodness in these words for you, in your worldly life and your religious life. In Al-Fawā'id, he writes, 'You should push back a thought. If you do not do this, it will develop into desire. Therefore, wage war against it. If you do not do this, it will become a firm intention and resolution. If you do not push this back, it will develop into a deed. If you do not make up by doing the opposite of it, it will become a habit, and once it becomes a habit, it will become difficult to remove it.'

'You must know that the initial stage of every knowledge is within your choice, and that it is your thoughts. These create fantasies and these will then give rise to intentions. These wills and intentions demand that the action should be done. A repetition of these actions causes a habit to form. Therefore, the goodness at this point lies in keeping the thoughts and notions good. The evilness of this stage lies in the evilness of the thoughts and notions.'

'The thoughts will be reformed when a person thinks over their Creator, paying attention to what pleases Him. Every type of reform is possible through His Being, one can get every type of guidance from Him, every type of inspiration is through the divine ability He gives. A person will be protected under His watch. In turning away from Him, there will be deviation and wretchedness.'

'You must know that whatever is connected to thoughts and evil whispers will lead towards pondering. This pondering will lead to remembering. This remembering and reminding will lead towards the will and intention being formed. This intention leads to physically doing something and committing a deed. When this becomes firmly established in a person, it becomes his habit. Dealing with all of this from the initial stages is much more easier compared to cutting it off after it has gone on its way and has become fully entrenched in you.'

'It is well known that man does not have the ability to kill off and end his thoughts. They come over him and pass through him just like his breathing does. However, the power of īmān and his intellect helps him to accept good thoughts, to be pleased with them and to then experience peace with them. It helps a person get rid off evil thoughts, to hate them and to come away from them.'

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ has created the soul similar to a grinding stone; it goes round and round without stopping. It is always in need of something to grind. If a person puts seeds, it will grind them. If a person places stones or sand, it will continue grinding.

The Effect of Obeying the Nafs Ammārah

The thoughts that revolve in the soul are like the seed placed in the grinding mill. The grinding stone does not stop. Something must be placed in it. Therefore, from amongst the people, there are those whose grinding stone grinds the seeds and flour comes out. He and others benefit from it. However, most grind soil, stones, grass, and other matter. When the time comes to make dough and bake, he sees the reality of what he was grinding.

Rashid Rida says, 'The person who obeys the soul that incites to evil will fall into immorality and transgression. Sometimes it will cause him to fall to the level where he considers acts of disobedience to be permissible, which is disbelief. For example, a person looks at women with desire. He then flirts with them. This takes him onto joking with them. He then touches them, and this leads to intercourse.' A poet says, 'When he saw me, he stared fixedly, then his heart fixated itself and this calls to adultery.' (Tafsīr Al-Manār vol.9 p.547)

Sayyidunā ‘Umar رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ said, “Take an account of your souls before you are taken to account. Weigh your souls before you are weighed.[1] Prepare for the great appearance before Allāh, on that day, nothing hidden will be hidden from you.”[2]

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[1] It will be easier for you tomorrow if you take account of yourselves today

[2] The statement of Sayyidunā ‘Umar رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ is quoted by Imām Tirmidhī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ as follows, ‘Take account of yourselves before you are taken to account. Prepare for the great appearance before Allāh. The reckoning will be light on the day of Qiyāmah for the one who takes account of himself in this world.” Imām Tirmidhī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ says, “Maymūn Ibn Mihrān is reported to have said, “A person cannot be truly righteous until he takes account of his soul in the same way as he takes account of his partner, where he gets his food and clothing from.”

Imām Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ says (Al-Hilyah vol.2 p.157, Al-Bidāyah wan Nihāyah vol.9 p.272), “A believer checks over himself. He takes an account of himself for the sake of Allāh. The reckoning will be easy and light on the Day of Qiyāmah for those who took an account of themselves in this world. On the contrary, the reckoning will be severe on the Day of Qiyāmah for those who were negligent in this regard.”

A believer sees something that he likes and he says, "By Allāh, I desire you. You are something that I need, but there is no way I can get to you." What this means is that he is not sure about the permissibility of the item. "If only a barrier had to come between us." He then does something which he did not like to occur. He turns to himself and says, "I did not intend for this. What have I to do with this? By Allāh, I do not have any excuse. I swear by Allāh, I will never do this again, Inshā Allāh." A believer is a prisoner in this world. He tries to free himself. He does not feel safe with anything until he meets Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, he knows that he will be taken to task regarding his ears, eyes, tongue and all the parts of his body.

The Shuyūkh would take Account of themselves before Sleeping

'Allāmah Munāwī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Fayd ul Qadīr vol.5 p.67 says, 'Shaykh Ibn 'Arabī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Our Shuyūkh used to take an account of themselves regarding whatever they said and whatever they did. They used to record this in writing. After 'Ishā Salāh, they would take an account of themselves and bring out this record. They would study whatever they said or did. Then they would see what the action or word required. If it required seeking forgiveness, they would seek forgiveness. If they were required to repent, they would

Similarly, fear Allāh regarding matters of your religion and have hope from Him in all your religious and worldly objectives.[1]

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repent. If there was a need to show gratitude, they would express gratitude. Only after this was done, they would go to sleep. We have added to this, our thoughts. We would record whatever thoughts passed through our minds. Then, we would see what our hearts spoke and took an account of them.

[1] You call Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ secretly at the time of your need. You ask Him for everything that you want. You mention all your secrets to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, that no one else knows. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ responds to you as He wills and how He wills out of His wisdom and kindness. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ is All-Wise, All-Knowing. He is All Hearing, All Seeing, and He has power over everything. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ has mentioned this to you in order to honour you without any limit, without any intermediary and without specifying any time limit or place. He says, 'Call unto me, I shall respond to you' (Sūrah Ghāfir, 60)

The door of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ is open; there is no doorkeeper or guard. We place our hopes in Him in every matter. This will apply even if you hope from Him in your heart, He will

Be patient upon what come upon you.[1] Sayyidunā ʻAlī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "Do not fear except your sins, do not have hope in

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respond. There is none worthy of worship but Allāh. So do not hope from anyone but Him.

[1] Do not feel that that a difficulty does not end. Everything has a time limit. You must realise that relief comes after difficutly and constriction. There are many proofs that illustrate this. Among these proofs are, 'Give glad tidings to those who are patient' (Sūrah Baqarah, 155). Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى did not say, 'Console those who exercise patience.' He said, 'Give glad tidings to those who exercise patience.' This shows that a person who exercises patience will experience the glad tidings of relief, reward, help, and ease.

Another proof is the Hadīth of Sahīh Bukhārī where Sayyidah Ayesha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا narrates that there was a black slave woman that was owned by an Arab tribe. The owners freed her but she stayed with them. A child from the house came out one day holding a belt that was decorated with pearls. The child left the belt on the floor. A kite flew by, thinking it to be meat, swooped down and took it away. She then says, "The family began searching for the belt and could not find it. They accused me of stealing it. They started to search me, they searched and checked everywhere, even

anyone but your Rabb,[1] the one who does not know should not feel shy to ask until he knows and the one who is asked should not feel shy to say, 'I do not know.'[1]

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in my under garment. By Allāh, I stayed with them even in this time of difficulty and trial. The kite happened to fly by, it threw the belt, and it fell right in front of them. I said, "Here is the item which you accused me of stealing. I am innocent of the crime. Here it is in front of you."

This woman then came to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and embraced Islām. Sayyidah Ayesha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said,"She used to come to me and speak to me. Whenever she would sit with me, she used to say, 'The story of the belt is from among the astonishing actions of our Rabb. He rescued me from the place of disbelief.'

Sayyidah Ayesha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said, "Why is it that whenever you sit with me, you say these couplets?" She then related the incident to me. (Sahīh Bukhārī vol.1 p.533)

[1] What an excellent explanation and what a good deed this is! It is narrated in the biography of the Muhaddith, Faqīh and ascetic, Ahmad Ibn Abī Ghālib Al-Baghdādī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, people would go to him and ask for Du'ā' because of his great piety. Someone came to him and said, "Ask so and so for something on my behalf." He said, "O my brother, come with me. We shall perform two Rak'āts of Salāh and then ask

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. I will not leave an open door for a door that is shut." (Manāqib Imām Ahmad p.640) Therefore, do not leave an open door for a door that is closed. The door of the treasures of Allāh are open, whilst the door of the creation is closed. Offer two Rak'āts solely for the pleasure of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and ask of Him. He is very close, He reponds to your Du'ā'. He is All-Wise, All-Knowing.

A Ruler is Dependent on Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ

'Abdur Rahmān Ibn Ibrāhīm Al-Fihrī says, 'A person went to the ruler for some of his needs. He found the ruler or king in prostration, supplicating and pleading before Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. This person thought to himself, 'This person is dependent on someone else, how can I depend on him? Why do I not present my needs to that Being before whom the needs of the creation are, they are all before Him, they do not confuse Him, nor is there any delay in Him fulfilling them.' He says that the ruler heard this. He said, "Bring that person to me." He was brought. He was given 10 000. The ruler then said, "The Being to whom I was supplicating whilst I was in prostration and the Being to whom you turned to is the One who gave you this." (Al-Luqat fī Hikāyāt as-Sālihīn)

[1] Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ said, "There are three types of knowledge; the book that speaks (the Qur'ān), the established Sunnah and saying, 'I do not know.'"

Al-Munāwī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in the commentary of this statement, 'It is learnt from this narration that it is the duty of a scholar that if he does not know the answer to a query, he should say, "I do not know" or "I am not sure" or "I do not have knowledge of it", or "Allāh knows best". If a person is asked and he says, "I do not know", it does not drop his rank in any way, as some ignorant people think. This is because the ignorance of a qualified scholar about some matter will not harm him. In fact, his saying,'I do not know' raises his rank and is proof of his great status, the strength of his Dīn, the fear of his Rabb, the purity of his heart, the perfect level of his recognition of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ and the excellence of his intention."

If a person is weak in Dīn and has very little recognition of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, he will look down on this statement. He fears a fall in his status in the eyes of those present in front of him but he does not fear his status falling in the sight of the Rabb of the worlds. This is an act of ignorance and weakness in religion.' (Fayd Al-Qadīr vol.4 p.387)

These words, 'I do not know' are recorded from the four Imāms, the Khulafā Ar-Rāshidīn. In fact, even from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ.'

Imām Abul Hasan Māwardī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "Since there is no way of encompassing all knowledge, there is no shame in

not knowing some part of it. Since seeing that there is no shame in not knowing some part of it, you should not feel shy to say, 'I do not know' with regard to something you do not know.' (Adab Ad-Dunyā wa Ad-Dīn p.82)

Saying 'I do not know' is Half of Knowledge

Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "The person who remains silent when he does not know, and he says this solely for the pleasure of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, he will not get any less reward than the person who speaks. The reason for this is that admitting ignorance is more difficult on the carnal self of a person.' Abū Tālib Makkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "This is because the beauty of a person remaining silent for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى out of piety is like the beauty of a person who speaks of knowledge for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى willingly." (Ihyā' vol.1 p.69)

If you say, 'I do not know', then People will inform you until you become of those who know

'Allāmah Ibn 'Abdul Barr رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ narrates from a person of knowledge, 'Learn to say, 'I do not know', and do not learn to say, 'I know'. This is because if you say, "I do not know", they will teach you until you know. But if you say, "I know", they will continue questioning you until you have no answer.' (Jāmi' Bayān Al-'Ilm vol.2 p.55)

You must know that the status of patience in īmān is like that of the head in the body.[1] If the head is chopped off, the entire body will be destroyed. Therefore, if you hear something that angers you with regard to your honour, then forgive and overlook. This is something from the actions of great determination and resolve. Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "The person who has fear of Allāh will never satiate his anger. The person who fears Allāh will never do whatever

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Abū Khaythamah An-Nasā'ī narrates on the authority of Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who said, "It is a part of knowledge for a person who does not know, to say, 'Allāh knows best.' (Kitāb Al-'Ilm p.120)

Ibrāhīm An-Nakha'ī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ asked a question to 'Amir Ash-Sha'bī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, a great Imām and scholar from the Tābi'īn. He replied, "I do not know." On hearing this, Ibrāhīm An-Nakha'ī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "I swear by Allāh, this is a true scholar. He was asked about something which he did not know and he said, "I do not know."

[1] Daylamī in Musnad Al-Firdaus has a narration from Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ with these words. It is a Da'īf narration. Bayhaqī mentions it in Mauqūf form from Sayyidunā 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as is stated in Al-Jāmi' As-Saghīr vol.4 p.234.

he desires.[1] If it were not for the Day of Qiyāmah, you would see something different in comparison to what you are seeing now."

Guard your thoughts and remain engaged in reforming yourself, from the faults of others.[2] There is a famous saying

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[1] There is a famous saying that the tongue of a pious person is bridled. He does not speak whatever he wants. (Al-Jāmi' of Imām Ibn Abī Zayd Qarawānī p.169)

[2] Sufyān Ibn Husayn Al-Wāsitī says, 'I spoke ill of a person who was in the presence of Iyās Ibn Mu'āwiyah Al-Muzanī. This person was the judge of Basra, a Tābi'ī and a highly intelligent scholar. He looked towards me and said, "Did you fight in Jihād against the Romans?" I said, "No." He asked, "Did you wage Jihād against Sindh, India and the Turks." I said, "No." He then said, "How is it that the Romans, the Sindhis, the Indians, and the Turks can be safe from you, and your Muslim brother cannot remain safe from you?" Sufyān says, "After this, I never went towards that deed again, i.e. I did not backbite anyone." (Al-Bidāyah wan Nihāyah vol.9 p.336)

that it is sufficient for a person to be blameworthy that the faults of others are seen clearly by him, but what is within himself remains hidden, or, he hates people for what he does himself, or, he harms his companion, or, he says useless things about people, use your intellect for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ by planning well. Seek help from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ over changing that which is destined.[1]

Imām Ibn Wahb Treated Backbiting by Spending

In Tartīb-ul-Madārik vol.3 p.240, Qādī Iyād mentioned the biography of Imām Ibn Wahb رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He was a great scholar, Muhaddith, Faqīh, and student of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Layth رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Sufyān Thaurī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He passed away in Egypt in 197 A.H. Ibn Wahb رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "I made it binding upon myself that whenever I speak ill of a person, I keep a fast. This became easy for me. Therefore, I made it binding upon myself that if I backbite about someone, then I shall give a Dirham in charity. Giving this charity seemed difficult, so I abandoned backbiting."

[1] This means that do not place your complete reliance on the planning of your intellect because the intellect is limited. It ends at a certain point. Together with adopting means, there is a need to place complete reliance on Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, that whatever is the result, good or bad, it is handed over to Him.

Sayyidunā ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “O son of Adam, do not rejoice over prosperity nor be despondent by poverty. Do not grieve over any calamity that befalls you[1], do not become happy by conditions of ease. This is because the gold is checked for its pure state by fire.[2]

This is because Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى He has greater mercy upon you than your own self and He knows of your harm and benefit more. The Qur’ān repeats this subject matter, ‘Allāh knows and you do not know.’

[1] Sayyidunā ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “I do not worry about what condition I get up in the morning, whether it is something pleasurable to me, or something that I do not like. This is because I do not know if goodness lies in that which I like or in that which I do not.” (Kitāb Al-‘Ilal wa Ma’rifah Ar-Rijāl vol.1 p.149)

[2] Gold is placed into fire and tested, so that the fake metals can be separated. ‘Allāmah Fayruzābādī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says in Basā’ir Dhawī At-Tamyīz fī Latā’if Al-Kitāb Al-Azīz vol.2 p.274, ‘Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى tests His servants with conditions of ease so that they may be grateful. At times, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى tests a person with difficulty so that they can be patient. His bounties and His causing difficulty for a person are all a test from Him. Being afflicted with a difficulty demands patience

whilst bounties from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى demands gratitude. It is easier to fulfil the demands of patience than it is to fulfil the rights of gratitude. Bounties from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى is therefore greater when the two are compared. This is why Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ said, "We were tested by difficulty and we exercised patience. Then we were tested by good conditions and we could not exercise patience." Sayyidunā 'Alī رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ said, "The person who has been given an abundance in terms of material items and he does not realize that he has been deceived, he has been deceived in his mind." Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى says, 'We shall definitely test you with evil and good, and to Us you will return.'

Eight Conditions come upon Man

Understand well that during this life, man does not ever stay on one condition. His condition changes from one to the other. A poet said, 'eight conditions come upon each person and every person has to face these eight conditions, happiness, grief, affiliation, separation, being in a straitened condition, prosperity, sickness and health.'

Those of foresight say that it is part of the impossible things to remain in one condition.

A pious person is tested with difficulty.[1] You will not be able to acquire whatever you want except by abandoning that

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[1] Sayyidunā Abū Umāmah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Allāh tests you with difficulty while He is fully aware about you, just as you check gold using fire. From those amongst you is the one who comes out as pure gold. That is the person whom Allāh has saved from evil. From amongst you is he who comes out like gold inferior to the first one. This is the level of the one who has some doubt. From among you is he who comes out like black gold. This is the person who has been put through trials." (Mustadrak Hākim vol.4 p.314)

The Gifts to Mankind from Jannah & Jahannam

Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "The person whom Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى created for Jannah will continue receiving the bestowals of difficulty. As for the person whom Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has created for Jahannam, he will continue receiving its bestowals of desires. (Kitāb-ul-Fawā'id p.32)

Bounties & Tests are Guests

Imām Abul Wafā Ibn 'Aqīl says in Kitāb-ul-Funūn that bounties are also guests. We should be grateful that they have come as guests. Difficulties and tests are also guests. We must be patient over them. So strive that your guests

leave with the best hospitality, they watch and bear testimony to what they see and hear.

Difficulties are a Bounty & the Virtues of their Effects

Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "The perfection of the bounty of Allāh upon His servants is that He imposes difficulty and hardship upon them in such a way that they turn towards Tauhīd and they call unto Him sincerely. They hope from Him and from no one else. Therefore, their hearts create a link with Him, not with anyone else. Therefore, reliance upon Allāh, turning to Him, the sweetness of īmān, tasting its enjoyment, freedom from polytheism are bounties. These are greater than the removal of sickness, fear, drought, and loss. Those of Tauhīd who devote themselves to Allāh, words cannot describe what they acquire. Every believer gets a share of this in accordance to the level of his īmān.

Difficulty is like the Bellows for a Servant of Allāh

Shaykh 'Abdul Qādir Jīlānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "O my beloved son, the difficulty does not come to destroy you. It has come to test your īmān and your patience. Therefore, the test is like the bellows for a servant. It is used to remove the rust on steel, he will come out pure, or he will be proven as bad.' It is said,

which you desire. You will never reach what you hope for unless you exercise patience over whatever you dislike. Use

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'We tested it and thought it was silver, but the heat of the bellows proved it to be spoilt iron.'

Know well that if there were no difficulties, then man would have become haughty and he would rebel and oppress. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ sends afflictions and protects him and purifies him. So, pure is the Being that shows mercy through sending difficulty and He tests by means of bounties. 'Sometimes by means of difficulty, Allāh sends a bounty, although the difficulty might be great. Sometimes people are tested by means of difficulty.'

It is Perfect Worship for the Intellect to be pleased with Taqdīr

Abul Wafā' Ibn Aqīl says, "Know well that the pleasure of the intellect upon the actions of Allāh is from amongst the actions of worship that are the most perfect, and it is the most difficult form of worship. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'possibly you dislike something, whereas it is good for you and possibly you like something but it is bad for you, and Allāh knows and you do not know.' (Adāb Ash-Shar'iyyah of Ibn Muflih Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ vol.2 p.193, 200, 204)

your strength in considering everything that has been made obligatory upon you.

Sayyidunā Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "By happy with what Allāh has decided for you, you will be the wealthiest of people. Stay away from what Allāh has forbidden, you will be the most righteous of the people."[1]

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[1] Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has placed independence in the Halāl. There are many people who stay away from Harām out of the fear of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and he is blessed with Halāl in accordance to the Sharī'ah. There is a very short moment between doing that which is forbidden and that which is lawful, it is a day or a part of the day. Shaykh Ibn Atāullāh Iskandarī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "The Being of our Rabb is very great, the servant does a cash transaction with Him, whilst He rewards on a credit basis. Look at this unique incident so that you can see the dealing of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

A Unique Incident Regarding Abandoning Harām and acquiring Halāl

Amīr Badr-ud-Dīn Yūsuf Al-Mahmandār, the son of Amīr Sayf-ud-Dīn Abul Ma'ālī Ibn Rimāh said, "Amīr Shujā'-ud-Dīn Muhammad Ash-Sharzī explained,

"I went to a person in the upper region of Egypt. He was very hospitable and showed great honour to us. This host

had a dark brown complexion and was quite old. Some of his children came in front of us. They had very beautiful features and had clear complexions. We said, "O man, how can it be that your children are so fair whilst you are so brown in complexion?" He said, "Their mother is European. I took her during the days of Nāsir Salāh-ud-Dīn when he was waging the war in Hittīn." We said, "How did she come to be with you?" He said, "There is a unique incident about this." We asked him to tell it to us.

He said, "I planted seeds in these lands. I got an amount equal to about five hundred Dīnārs. I could not get any more for it. A friend told me to take it to Syria. I took it all the way to Syria but I could not get any more for it. Another person told me to sell it as a debt for a specific time so that I could recover some of my expenses. Therefore, I sold some of it as a debt for six months and I kept some with me. I rented a shop in which I started doing business until the six months expired. Whilst I was busy in trade, a European woman, a wife of one of the soldiers came to me. The European women walk around in the market places without covering their faces. She came to purchase flax seeds. I was taken aback by her beauty. I sold some flax seeds to her and was quite generous too. She returned after a few days and I was even more open hearted in comparison to the first time. She came repeatedly and realized that I had an attraction

towards her. I said to an old woman that was with her, "I am very attracted to this woman, how could I get to her?" The old woman conveyed the message. She said, "All our souls, mines, hers, and yours are going to depart from this world." I said, "If my soul departs with her, it is nothing serious."

We agreed that I should give her fifty Dīnārs and she would come to me. I weighed the Dīnārs and handed them over to the older woman with her. She said to me, "Make your place ready, and we shall come tonight." I went out and prepared whatever I could. I arranged for food, drink, lamps, and sweetmeats and so on. My house overlooked the ocean and it was the summer time. I laid out the carpet on the top of the house. The European woman arrived. We ate and drank. It soon turned dark and we slept under the skies, whilst the moon was shining upon us and stars were sparkling in the water.

I said to myself, "Are you not ashamed of yourself? You are away from home, beneath the skies, overlooking the ocean, but you are in the disobedience of Allāh, with a Christian woman? You will be worthy of Jahannam, and the punishment of the world." I also told myself, "O Allāh, bear witness, I stay away from her out of shame for you and out of fear for Your punishment." I then went to sleep.

The woman got up angry the next morning and went away. I went to my shop and sat there. Suddenly, I saw her crossing towards me, together with the old woman. She was quite angry. She looked like the moon. I was immediately overtaken by her beauty and said to myself, "Who do you think you are by leaving this young woman? Do you think that you are Junayd or Sirrī Saqatī?" I went to the old woman and said, "Come back." She said, "By Jesus, we will not, unless you pay a hundred Dīnārs." I said, "Agreed." I returned to my shop and weighed the Dīnārs and gave them. She then came to me again. The same thoughts as I had previously returned to my mind and I left her solely for the pleasure of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى.

She went on her way and went to my shop. After a few days, she came to me and spoke as if a stranger would have. She said, "By Jesus, you will never be able to enjoy me until you pay five hundred Dīnārs or you will die out of grief." I was disturbed at what she said and I resolved that I would even suffer the loss of my flax stocks and give myself over to her.

Whilst all these thoughts were roaming in my mind, someone announced, "O Muslims, the truce is now finished. We are giving chance until Friday to the Muslim here. They should complete all their work and return to their localities." In this way, she was separated from me. I started

to collect the money that people owed me and made arrangements with others for them to pay the remainder.

I took a significant amount of stock and left Acre (the port in Palestine). My heart was still brimming with desire for that European woman. I reached Damascus and sold my stock at a much higher price because there was a shortage of goods after the truce ended. I then started a slave business with the hope that I will forget about her. I went fully into this new business.

Three years passed. The Battle of Hittīn occurred and Sultan Nāsir Salāh-ud-Dīn eventually gained control over the lands and conquered the coastal areas with the permission of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. Someone had requested me to send a slave woman to Sultan Nāsir Salāh-ud-Dīn. I had a very beautiful slave woman who was bought for him for a hundred Dīnārs. They sent ninety Dīnārs and owed me ten. They did not have the remaining ten in the treasury because the king had spent everything.

The officials consulted with each other about what to do. The king said, "Take this person (myself) to the treasury where the European female prisoners of war are kept. Let him choose one in exchange of the ten Dīnārs that are owed to him." I went to the treasury. I saw the same European woman and recognized her. I said, "Give her to me." I took

her and went to my tent. I said to her, “Do you know me?” She said, “No.” “I am the trader from such and such place with whom such and such incident had occurred with you. You took my money and said, “You will never be able to see and enjoy me until you pay five hundred Dīnārs, and now I have taken you for just ten Dīnārs.” She said, “Extend your hand, I bear witness that there is no deity but Allāh and Muhammad is the Rasūl of Allāh.” She embraced Islām and became a very good Muslim.

I said to myself, “By Allāh, I will not take her under my care until we get an instruction from the judge.” I went to Ibn Shaddād and related to him the entire incident. He was astonished and ratified our marriage. She spent the night with me and fell pregnant. The army came and we went to Damascus. After a few months, the messenger of the king came to ask for all the prisoners and slaves, this was because of an agreement that was made between the kings. All the male and female prisoners were returned, whilst my European wife stayed with me.”

The officials asked about her. They continued asking many questions in order to find her. Someone gave the information that she was with me. They then came to search for her by me. I came forward. I was very scared. In fact, the colour of my face changed. She said to me, “What happened

to you? What has overcome you?" I said, "The messenger of the king came. They have taken all the male and female prisoners. They have come to ask me." She said, "Do not worry about anything. Take me to them. I know what to say."

I took her and went in front of the king. Sultān Nāsir Salāh-ud-Dīn was sitting with his messenger on his right. I said, "This is the woman, she is with me." The king and the messenger said, "Do you want to return to your land or to your husband? You and the others have all been freed." She said, "I have already embraced Islām and I have fallen pregnant. See the size of my stomach. The Europeans can no longer benefit from me." The messenger said, "Who is more beloved to you? This Muslim or your husband so and so." She gave the same reply as before. The messenger said to the Europeans who were there, "Listen to what she has to say."

The messenger then said to me, "Take your wife, and you can go." I turned around and left with her. The messenger then came with a message, "Her mother entrusted me with something for her and said, "My daughter is in captivity. She has no clothes and she is dishevelled. Please send this box to her." I accepted the box and we continued to our house. She opened the box and found her material that her mother had

Fulfil whatever Allāh has made obligatory upon you; you will be amongst the greatest of worshippers,[1]

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woven. She also found two heaps of money. The fifty Dīnārs and the hundred Dīnārs that I had given her. They were exactly as I had given them. These are my children from her. She is still with us and she is the one who prepared this food."

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "It is clear from this incident and from other similar ones that the person who stays away from Harām for the pleasure of Allāh, Allāh will grant him something that is Halāl. Our Rabb is far beyond this, that His servant treats him on a cash basis, whilst He rewards him on a credit basis."

[1] Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in I'lām-ul-Muwaqqi'īn vol.2 p.157, 'Being a slave is the right of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, over every person, in accordance to his rank and level. This is something different from the general servitude that Allāh has made equal over all His servants.

The servitude of a scholar is that he should spread and propagate the Sunnah and knowledge of Dīn, which Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ sent with His messenger صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. This type of servitude does not apply to an ignorant person. Moreover, the scholar must be patient in spreading the knowledge, and this type of patience is not applicable to others.

The servitude of a ruler is that he must establish the truth, spread it and enforce it upon those upon whom it must be enforced. He must exercise patience and strive to such an extent in this regard that is not applicable to a Muftī.

The servitude of a wealthy person is that he must fulfil the rights of his wealth. This type of servitude does not apply to a poor person.

The person who has the ability to command good and forbid evil using his hands and tongue must do so. This is his form of servitude to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. This is not applicable to a person who cannot do so.

On one occasion, Yahyā Ibn Mu'ādh Rāzī was speaking about Jihād and commanding good and forbidding evil. A woman said to him, "We, women, are absolved of this responsibility." He said, "You are absolved from the weapons of the hands and the tongue, but you are not absolved from the weapon of the heart." The woman said, "Correct, may Allāh reward you."

Shaytān has deluded many people. He beautified certain acts of worship for them, like the remembrance of Allāh, recitation of the Noble Qur'ān, Salāh, fasting, abstinence and cutting off from the world. In doing this, they completely abandoned the forms of servitude that we have described

above. They do not even think about fulfilling them. These acts of servitude are with the scholars, the true 'Ulamā', those who are indispensable for Dīn. Dīn means to stand up for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى with whatever He commanded. Therefore, the person who abandons the rights of Allāh which he is bound to do is in a worse off condition in the sight of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى and the sight of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ than the one who commits sins and acts of disobedience.

The person who has knowledge of what Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى sent Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ with, and knowledge of what he and the Sahābah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ stood for, will realize that most of the people who are considered to be religious, those who adopt a false image of abstinence and stay away from the world, they are the ones who help the Dīn of Allāh the least, we seek help from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى.

What level of Dīn is there and what goodness is there in a person who sees the prohibitions of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى being committed, the limits set by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى being transgressed, the religion of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى being abandoned, and the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ being shunned, while he himself is a cold-hearted and dumb devil?

The misfortune of Dīn comes from these people. As long as they get their food and enjoy their high positions, they do not bother about what is happening to the Dīn! The best of

them is he who pretends to be grieved and he pretends to cry over what is happening to the Dīn. If something brings shame to him, he will spend all his wealth and all his effort and would use all three means, his hand, tongue and heart to refute and deny it. These people have no position in the sight of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ is averse to them, they are being tested in this world with the greatest of trials without them even realizing it. This is the trial of the death of the heart. The more complete the life of a heart is, the more stronger does it show anger for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and His Rasūl صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ, and the more complete will its revenge for the sake of Dīn be.

When a Worshipper or an Ascetic Person is Silent in the Face of Evil, he will be Punished First

Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ and other scholars have mentioned an incident that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ instructed an angel to overturn a certain town. The angel said, "How can I do this when there is a worshipper living there?" Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ said, "Start the punishment with him because his face never changed its expression for My sake."

Abū 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul Barr mentions in his work, At-Tamhīd, that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ sent revelation to a certain Nabī, 'Say to a certain ascetic person, "As for all your asceticism, you have

hastened comfort for yourself. As for you devoting yourself towards Me, you have earned honour through it. However, what have you done for the right which I have over you?' He said, "O my Rabb, what is the right that You have over me?" Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said, "Did you befriend a friend of Mine for My sake, or did you alienate an enemy of Mine for My sake?" (Al-Hilyah vol.10. p.316)

The Meaning of the Hadīth: 'And that is the Weakest form of īmān'

Imām Qarāfī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, the leading Mālikī scholar of his time says (Al-Furūq vol.4 p.256), 'We see a person who has the greatest īmān in a position where he is unable to refute evil using his hand or his tongue. Despite his strong īmān, his inability to do so does not negate his respect and honour for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and the strength of his īmān. This is because the inability to do this action does not necessarily mean deficiency in īmān. What would the meaning of the Hadīth be, wherein Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, 'whoever among you sees a wrong; he should change it using his hand. If he cannot, then he should use his tongue. If he cannot, then he should use his heart, and that is the weakest of īmān'?

The answer is that īmān in the Hadīth refers to practical īmān, not the īmān in the heart. An example of this is the verse, 'Allāh will not allow your īmān to go to waste' (Sūrah

Baqarah, 143). In this verse, īmān refers to Salāh that the Muslims had performed whilst facing Bayt-ul-Muqaddas. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Imān has more than seventy branches. The highest form is bearing testimony that there is none worthy of worship but Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and the lowest form is removing an obstacle from the path."

The analysis in the Hadīth can also stand correct in deeds, yet Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ referred to it as īmān. The most powerful part of practical īmān is to remove and stop wrong and evil. This is because it requires removing something harmful immediately. Then comes the stage of the tongue. The tongue has second place because sometimes it removes an evil and sometimes it does not. As for showing dislike with the heart, it does not remove any evil whatsoever. Alternatively, it has no real effect in removing an evil. Therefore, it is only īmān that remains in the person. Alternatively, the essence of īmān remains, meaning that only affirmation with the heart remains. Hence, weakness of īmān in the Hadīth means that the īmān of a person is like a stranger and it has no system and order. A Hadīth states, 'Islām started as a stranger and it will return to being like a stranger just as it had started.' The Hadīth does not mean the weakness in terms of considering the evil as evil in the heart. This is because he has fulfilled the obligation that was

Do not complain about the one who is most merciful to you, to the person who shows no mercy to you. Seek help from Allāh only, you will become amongst His special ones. Sayyidunā ʻUbādah Ibn Sāmit رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "O my son, show despondency for what is in the hands of people; that is prosperity. Beware of greed and of asking people to fulfil your needs, that is real poverty."[1]

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on him. Allāh does not burden a person with that which he cannot do.

Praiseworthy & Blameworthy Poverty

[1] Reprehensible or blameworthy poverty is where the soul is in poverty, it is never satisfied. This is the type of poverty that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ sought protection from, 'O Allāh, indeed I seek protection with you from poverty.'

As for that type of poverty that means lack of wealth, that is a different matter. There are many Ahādīth that state the virtue and merit of such poverty. Many of the pious predecessors preferred poverty to wealth and affluence. I shall present an example of poverty despite the person having outward prosperity and affluence,

A person said to Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, "O Abū Ishāq, it would please me if you accept this cloak from me." The person said, "If you are wealthy, I shall accept. However, if

When you perform Salāh, then perform it as though you are going to leave the world, bidding farewell to it.[1]

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you are poor, then I will not accept it." The person said, "I am a wealthy man." Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ asked, "How much wealth do you have?" He replied, "Two thousand Dīnārs." Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Would you not like to have four thousand Dīnārs instead of two thousand Dīnārs?" The person said, "Indeed, I would like to have it." Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "You are a poor person and I will not accept it from you."

Five Personalities who would be fully engaged in Worship

[1] This type of worship was common amongst the pious predecessors. The biographical works and history books speak about many people who were of this nature. We shall discuss five people who lived around the same time and place:

'Abdur Rahmān Ibn Abī Nu'm Al-Bajalī Al-Kūfī. He passed away just before 100 A.H. He was a great Tābi'ī. He was among the reliable people of his time and a great worshipper of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. Bukayr Ibn 'Amir says about him, "If someone had to tell him that the angel of death was coming for him to take his soul, there would not have been

any more good deeds he could have done." (Tārīkh Al-Islām vol.4 p.144)

Muslim Ibn Yasār Al-Basrī. He passed away in 100 A.H. He was also a great Tābi'ī, jurist and ascetic. Ibn 'Aun narrates from 'Abdullāh Ibn Muslim Ibn Yasār that when his father used to perform Salāh, it was as though he was a peg firm in the ground. He would not move or sway from side to side. Ghaylān Ibn Jarīr said, "When Muslim Ibn Yasār used to perform Salāh, he was like a garment that had been thrown aside, meaning, he did not move." Ibn Shaudhab said, "When Muslim Ibn Yasār was about to start Salāh, he would tell his house folk, "You can continue talking, I do not hear the conversation." It is also said that once there was a fire in his house. The house folk entinguished it. When this was told to him later on, he said, "I did not even realise." (Tārīkh Al-Islām vol.4 p.54)

Imām Mansūr Ibn Al-Mu'tamir As-Sulamī Al-Kūfī. He passed away in 132 A.H. Sufyān Thaurī, his student, says, "If you saw Mansūr performing Salāh, you would say, 'He is going to pass away now.'"

Muhammad Ibn Sūqah Al-Ghanawī Al-Kūfī. He was the teacher of Sufyān Thaurī and 'Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak. Sufyān Ibn 'Uyaynah said, "There were three such people in Kufa, that if you had to tell them, "You are going to pass away

You should know well that you will not get the taste of īmān until you believe in Taqdīr, the good of it and the bad of it.[1]

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tomorrow", they would not be able to any more good deeds than what they were already doing. They are, Muhammad Ibn Sūqah, 'Amr Ibn Qays Al-Mulā'ī and Abū Hayyān Yahyā Ibn Sa'īd At-Tamīmī. Muhammad Ibn Sūqah was such that he was unable to disobey Allāh." (Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.9 p.209)

You can also study the work, Iqāmat-ul-Hujjah 'alā an Al-Ikthār fit Ta'abbud Laysa bi Bid'ah of Maulānā 'Abdul Hayy Lucknowī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

[1] This means that you must believe that everything is from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. You must know and have conviction that whatever comes to you would never have been able to avoid you, and whatever misses you, it would never have afflicted you.

The great Tābi'ī, Walīd Ibn 'Ubādah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I went to my father, Sayyidunā 'Ubādah Ibn Sāmit رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ when he was on his death bed and said, "O my father, give me some advice and strive in it for my sake." He said, "Make me sit up." He then said, "O my beloved son, you will never experience the taste of īmān and you will never reach the essence of knowledge about Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ until you believe in Taqdīr, the good of it and the bad of it."

I said, "O my father, how can I know what is the good of it and the bad of it?" He replied, "You must know that whatever misses you would never have befallen you and whatever comes to you would never been able to avoid you. O my beloved son, I heard Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, "The first thing that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى created was the pen. He said to it, 'Write', so, whatever is going to happen from that time until the Day of Qiyāmah will certainly take place. O my beloved son, if you pass away without believing in this, you will enter Jahannam." (Musnad Ahmad vol.5 p.317)

Sayyidunā Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, "I was sitting behind Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ one day and he said, "O boy, I shall teach you something. Look after the rights of Allāh, Allāh will look after you. Look after the rights of Allāh, you will find Him before you. When you ask, then ask from Allāh alone. You must know that if the entire creation had to come together in order to give you some benefit, they will never be able to do so, until Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has recorded it. If the entire creation had to get together in order to harm you in any way, they will never be able to do so, unless Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى had written it such. The pens have been raised and the pages have dried up." (Tirmidhī)

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ used to make Du'ā', 'O Allāh, I ask You for īmān that is close to my heart, so that I know that

nothing but that which You destined for me will afflict me, I ask you for contentment with the livelihood that you have fixed for me." (Majma'-uz-Zawā'id vol.10 p.181)

The One who does not believe in Taqdīr will not have a Good Life

The great scholar, Ibrāhīm Al-Harbī, a student of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The wise men of every Ummah are unanimous on the point that the person who is not pleased with his destiny will never be satisfied with his life." (Tārīkh Baghdad vol.6 p.30)

Do not make Taqdīr as Proof for Doing Sin

You must be aware and on your guard for using Taqdīr as an excuse for whatever shortcomings you have, sins and acts of disobedience that you do. Taqdīr is not a proof in this regard. Taqdīr does not force you to obey an order by doing some sin. In fact, it is you who has followed his desires willfully and it is you who inclined towards the base and lowly desires and forbidden actions. Now you try to free yourself by blaming it on Taqdīr? Now you attribute the committing of sin to Taqdīr in order to free yourself from the crime and dirt?! This is a clear misunderstanding and deviation from the correct Islāmic belief. We seek the protection of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ from this.

Rebuttal to the one who uses Taqdīr as a Proof for Sin

Some people said to Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “O Abū ‘Abdur Rahmān, there are people involved in adultery, drinking liquor, stealing and murder. After all this is done, they say, ‘Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى was aware of all this, we cannot find any other alternative.’ Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ became very angry and said, “Glory be to Allāh, the Great. It was in the knowledge of Allāh that they would do those actions. The knowledge of Allāh did not force them to do it. The example of the knowledge of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is like that of the skies which is a canopy above you and the earth holds you up. Just as you cannot go beyond the skies and the earth, in the same way, you cannot go beyond the knowledge of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Just as the skies and the earth cannot force you into sinning, in the same way, the knowledge of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى cannot force you to sin.”

Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then said, “A person who sins and then admits that he committed a sin is more beloved to me than the person who fasts during the day and spends the night standing in worship before Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and yet he says, ‘Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى caused me to err in my fasting and worship at night.’ (Al Munyah wal Amal fī Sharh Kitāb Al-Milal wan Nihal pp.25, 26)

Five Incidents that Show that Taqdīr cannot be overcome

I present five incidents, from amongst many others in history, which show that if Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ has decreed peace and safety for a person, then no one will be able to afflict him with any harm or difficulty. If Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ has decreed destruction and ruin for a person, then nothing can protect him, even the most secure of places.

We shall first narrate four incidents regarding those whom Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ protected, whilst others had desired destruction for them. In these incidents, the person remained safe and secure, whilst those who willed destruction for him failed in their plans.

Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.6 p.286 under the biography of 'Abdur Rahmān Ibn Abī Nu'm Al-Bajalī Al-Kūfī that he was a pious person who passed away in 100 A.H. Muhammad Ibn Fudayl says that 'Abdur Rahmān Ibn Abī Nu'm Al-Bajalī Al-Kūfī would tie the Ihrām from one year to the next and he would say, 'If the Labbayk is with ostentation, then do not go.'

He was from the great worshippers of Kufa. He would remain patient upon perpetual hunger. He came to Hajjāj on the Day of Jamājim (a battle) and gave him advice. Hajjāj

caught him in order to kill him. Hajjāj placed him in a dark house and kept him locked up in there for fifteen days. He then instructed to open the door so that ‘Abdur-Rahmān could be buried. The people went inside; they found him standing in Salāh. Hajjāj said, “Go wherever you want.”

Whoever took part in Dayr Al-Jamājim was never seen laughing again

Dayr Al-Jamājim is a place near Kufa. ‘Abdur Rahmān Ibn Ash’ath fought Hajjāj Ibn Yūsuf there. The detail of this incident can be studied in the books of history under the events of 83 A.H. This place was called Dayr Al-Jamājim because there was a heap of skulls of the killed and the place was built from the skulls of the killed. A great number of ‘Ulamā’, pious people and worshippers took part in this battle. They were killed with ‘Abdur-Rahmān Ibn Ash’ath.

Talha Ibn Masraf, the senior Qārī of Kufa saw someone laughing and said, “This person did not go to Jamājim.” This meant that if he saw the incident at Dayr Al-Jamājim, he would never laugh upon seeing so many great scholars being killed. (Tāj-ul-‘Urūs vol.8 p.233)

Hajjāj would sometimes show the honour due to people and acknowledge their virtue, despite his great oppression. He would sometimes honour people and free them from

oppression, as was mentioned in the first incident. There are stories of this nature mentioned in the history works. By Allāh, some of the pious people are such that they even force the oppressors to respect them and by the command of Allāh, they are freed from oppression and killing.

Abū Nu'aym in Hilyah vol.10 p.324 mentions under the biography of Bunān Al-Hammāl. He was a reliable narrator, a pious man and great worshipper of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. He was from Baghdad and then later came to settle in Egypt. He had a high position in the sight of the masses and the elite class. He never accepted anything from the kings and rulers. His great worship was proverbial. A great Sūfī, Abū 'Alī Raudhabārī says, "I came to Egypt to see pious people that were thrown before lions to be eaten by them. However, the lions did not cause any harm to him." The story is that Bunān Al-Hammāl advised the ruler, Ibn Tūlūn, to do good deeds. Ibn Tūlūn became angry and issued instructions that he should be thrown to the lions. When this was done, the lions smelled him and did not cause any difficulty to him. When he was released, and asked, "What condition did you experience when the lions were smelling you?" He said, "I was thinking about the differences of the scholars regarding the saliva of wild animals, whether it is pure or impure."

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'Glory be to Allāh, how firm and steadfast he remained! He was closely linked to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, and he turned away from everything besides Him. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ allowed Bunān Al-Hammāl to live for a long time. He outlived Ibn Tūlūn by 43 years. He passed away in Egypt in 313 A.H. He would say, "The brave person is free. The treacherous person will always be in fear. The person who harms others will be isolated."

The great author, Mustafā Sādiq Al-Rāfi'ī wrote an article on this incident. He titled it, 'The Lion'. This article has many lessons and pieces of advice. I shall mention a part of what he has written on the importance of the presence of a pious person in society. He wrote, 'That place where there is no pious luminary, from the people who have the correct religion, who possesses a perfect soul and divine ways, is a place in ignorance, like a place devoid of books. This will apply even if all the people there are 'Ulamā', even if every district of that area has a Madrasah, and even if every house has a library. These books do not do away with the need of men. The reason for this is that they are either correct or incorrect. Intellect will decide this.'

'However, a perfect person is correct. This is related to the soul. His effect on people is much more effective than

knowledge. This person is a practical explanation in different situations. The life of his soul is at work, it works and invites towards itself.'

'If people were to spend many years debating on the meanings of the virtues and the means of acquiring them, if they had to see a person who has the best of virtues, and then stay with him, he will be of the greatest benefit to all, in comparison to the debates, and he will be of much more use. He will be able to show them virtues in a much more better way than even a hundred or a thousand books.'

'It is for this reason that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ sent a Messenger with every book He revealed. This was so that it could give strength to its presence and to take out meanings that will be understood and to create virtuous human virtues like the great generation of men.'

'The sign of a perfect person among them is that his presence has a greater impact on those around him, even more than upon his own self. It is as though there is a bond between him and the souls. He holds a position like that of a grandfather amongst his grandchildren. Whoever sees him feels that he has the greatest personality. This is the person who has the ability to perfect people. It is as though he is a special creation who proves that the impossible is possible.'

'It is the strange and unique wisdom of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى that some types of illnesses are such that the patient affected by them is a means of conveying the illness to others. Similarly, there are strong forces that affect those who are attached to them or those who remain in their company. It is for this reason that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى creates pious people and makes their piety affect others as an illness affects others. Like the illness, the effect of the Taqwā in them turns them away from the desires of the world, just as illness makes a person lose desire and it breaks the carnal self just as illness breaks them. It finishes off that thing on account of which it came about. Therefore, the value of it changes, then false notions do not remain, but whatever has the truth in it remains.'

'When people do not find such a person, who will guide them through his unique strength, then there will be very few people who will have the ability for the strength. Great righteous people, great leaders, brave men, and magnificent scholars are all alike. All of them are like great illnesses (in terms of the language of wisdom) in causing effect. Whoever mixes with them is affected by their actions and qualities.'

The student of Ibn Hazm Zāhirī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Hāfiz Humaydī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, in Jadhwah Al-Muqtabis fī Dhikr Wulāt Al-Andalus p.118, says that the minister Abū 'Umar Ahmad Ibn Sa'īd Ibn Hazm was sitting in front of Mansūr Abū 'Amīr, the leader of Spain

(392 A.H). A note written by the mother of one of his prisoners was presented to him. She was requesting mercy for her son. Mansūr was extremely angry for the crime that the person committed.

He read the letter and became even more furious. He said, "By Allāh, you have reminded me." He took the pen and wanted to write, 'he should be hanged', but he wrote, 'he should be freed'. He threw the note to the minister. The minister took the pen and the note. He then started writing in accordance to the authority he held. Mansūr said, "What are you writing?" He replied, "I am writing that a certain person should be freed." Mansūr became angry and said, "Who said that you should write that?" The minister showed the writing of the king.

He saw this and said, "I have made a mistake. By Allāh, he must be crucified." He then drew a line across his signature and wanted to write, 'he should be crucified', but he wrote, 'he should be freed'. The minister took the note so that he could inform the governor to free that person. Mansūr looked at him and became angry. He asked, 'Who asked you to inform of this?' The minister showed him the writing and his signature. He saw his own writing and drew a line across it.

He now intended to write, 'he should be crucified', but wrote 'he should be freed'. The minister took the note and began writing to the governor. Mansūr saw him the signature, with the instruction that the prisoner should be freed. He saw it and was surprised. He said, "Yes, he should be freed, no matter what I feel. Allāh has intended that he should be freed, I do not have the ability to stop this."

Abul Hasan Ar-Raqqām Muhammad Ibn 'Imrān Al-'Abdī Al-Basrā says in Al-'Afw wal I'tidhār p.559, 'The historians have explained that when Hajjāj Ibn Yūsuf captured 'Amir Ibn Hattān, then he ordered that the head of 'Amir be chopped off. The punished appointed for the task stood at his head. In extreme anger, Hajjāj said, "Chop off the head of this person who is the the child of an adultress." 'Amir raised his head and said, "O Hajjāj, your house folk raised you in a terrible way. After death, is there any objective for which I want to keep you alive? What has made you content that I would not reply to the abuse you have uttered?" Hajjāj was ashamed and lowered his head.

He then raised his head and said to 'Amir, "Is there scope to show any favour to you?" He said, "Yes." Hajjāj asked for a horse, saddle, reins and money for him." He said, "You can go wherever you want." When he came to his people, they said, "Go back to fight this sinner. This is because Allāh has

freed you, not him." 'Amir said, "This can never be. In reality, the hand that freed is the hand that shackled. The reality is that the one who frees can then capture." He said some poetry. The summary of this was that he does not like to refuse the good treatment that was shown to him.

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'May Allāh protect you. See, the instruction was issued that the person be killed and it was about to be carried out. Due to the wrong word coming out, he was saved. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ kept him alive until the time of his death came. There is a famous saying, 'Death is the best watchman'.

The fifth incident is about people who wanted peace and safety, but Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ decreed that the person be destroyed.

Some pious and truthful army soldiers have explained that there was an officer in the Ottoman Army in the First World War. They prepared for a fight with the enemy. Every soldier took his position. They dug their trenches and protected themselves. A commander walked past in order to inspect their preparations and positions. The commander liked the position and preparations made by a soldier. The commander said to the soldier, "Leave that position." The commander put one of his friends there.

The soldier who was there at first came out angrily. The tables turned in the battle and the enemy fired on the people. A bomb landed on the spot where the soldier was taken out from and killed the friend of the commander that was placed there. The soldier who was there first lived a long life. Glory be to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. Nothing can overpower his decision.

From this story, no one should understand that caution cannot push back destiny and decree. This is because caution is required by the Sharī'ah, whether it repulses destiny or not. A great Tābi'ī, Mutarrif Ibn 'Abdullāh beautifully said, "It is not appropriate for a person to climb a high place and then drop himself and then say, 'My Rabb decreed this." Rather, he should adopt caution and strive. Then if something happens, he must understand that whatever was decreed had happened. (Tārīkh Al-Islām vol.4 p.64)

It is mentioned in the biography of the great Tābi'ī, Muslim Ibn Yasār Al-Basrī that he said, "You must do good deeds like a person who is convinced that nothing but his deeds will save him. Place your trust in Allāh like a person who is convinced that nothing will afflict him except that which Allāh has destined for him." (Tārikh Al-Islām vol.4 p.55)

Become a person who speaks the truth and acts one it. Allāh will increase you in spiritual light and foresight. Do not become a person who commands the truth but stays away from it. You will return with the sin. You will be presenting yourself for the anger of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'Very disliked it is in the sight of Allāh that you say that which you do not do.' (Sūrah Saff, 3)

Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ said, "Whoever advises but does not heed the advice and he reprimands but is not affected by it himself, he warns but does not stay away, he will be counted amongst the losers in the sight of Allāh."[1]

You must not mix except with an intelligent person who fears Allāh, do not sit except with a scholar of foresight.[2] Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ was asked, "Which company is best?"

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[1] I could not find this narration in the books of Hadīth, and Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ knows best

[2] Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ said, "The is only darkness in the world, except for the gatherings of the 'Ulamā'. (Jāmi' Bayān Al-'Ilm wa Fadlihi vol.1 p.51) Sahl Ibn 'Abdullāh Tustarī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ said, "The person who wants to see the gatherings of the Ambiyā', he should look at the gatherings of the 'Ulamā'." (Miftāh Dār-us-Sa'ādah p.129)

He said, "When you see him, he reminds you of Allāh,[1] his speech increases you in knowledge and his deeds remind you of the hereafter."[1]

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[1] The reason for this is that looking at a person who is worthy of emulation has a very great impact on the soul in comparison to listening about him. It also has a longer lasting effect on the person who looks at him. The Sahābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ had the greatest share of this. They sat in the company of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, they watched him and were very close to him صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. They were the best of mankind that were selected for the guidance of mankind after Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Looking at a pious person reminds one of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, because of the spiritual light, peace, love and serenity that a person sees in his ways, his appearance, his humility, his speech, his silence, the lowering of his head, his movements, his remaining still, and all his other matters. Therefore, when a person looks at such a pious person, it reminds him of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. The appearance of this pious person pushes him to turn towards Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Therefore, these righteous people are such, when they are seen, one is reminded of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

How is Goodness Placed in the Hearts of those who sit in the company of the Pious

In Nawādir-ul-Usūl p.140, Hakīm Tirmidhī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentions the commentary of these words and says, 'These are the people that have clear signs from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ on their faces, they have the splendor of close proximity to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, the light of His might, the awe of His greateness and the affiliation of honour covers them. Therefore, when a person looks at any of them, he remembers Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ because of the effects of divinity which he sees on them.'

'The heart is the mine of all these things and it is the abode of spiritual light. The face drinks from the water of the heart. Therefore, if the heart has the spiritual light of the power of the promises of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ and the warnings of His punishment, it will convey the same spiritual light to the face. Therefore, if you see that face, it will remind you of piety and goodness. The awe of righteousness and knowledge of the commands of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ will impact you.'

'If the heart has the spiritual light of the truth, it will convey the same to the face. If your eyes fall on that face, it will remind you of honesty and the truth. The greatness of the

truth and steadfastness will have a great impact on you. If the spiritual light of the power, greatness and might of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى is in the heart, it will be conveyed to the face. If you will look at the face of such a person, it will remind you of the power and greatness of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. If the heart has the spiritual light of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى, which is the height of spiritual light, then looking at such a person will stop you from shortcomings and sins.'

'The position of the heart is that it irrigates the face and makes it drink from the water of life with which it remains fresh. Therefore, whatever is in the heart is conveyed to the face. The face of this person has drunk from each of these forms of spiritual light. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى says, 'And He will grant them joy in the heart and brightness on the face.' (Sūrah Insān, 11).

'When the heart is happy because of the pleasure of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى with a person and because of the spiritual light which He puts in it, the face becomes bright because of what has entered the heart. This is what Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ was speaking about when he said that a person remembers Allāh when he sees a pious person. Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ said that this is a sign for those who are the pious and close friends of Allāh.'

Shaykh ‘Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, ‘This type of noble people were found in great abundance amongst the pious predecessors. People would go out and search for this type of people in order to meet them and look at them. This is because looking at them illuminates their hearts, encourages righteousness, creates love for Dīn and reminds them of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ.

Going to the Gatherings of the ‘Ulamā’ & Pious in order to learn from them and acquire Munificence from them

‘Allāmah Ibn Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Sayd-ul-Khātir vol.2 p.303 says, ‘A group of the pious predecessors would go out and search for a pious servant of Allāh, in order to look at his ways and manners, not to gain any knowledge from him. This is because the fruit of all his knowledge was his ways and mannerisms.’

Abū Tālib Makkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Qūt-ul-Qulūb that the pious predecessors would travel to the different cities and look for the pious, meet them, see them and gain blessings from them. They would also learn manners from them.

Abul ‘Abbās Al-Bardā’ī says, ‘I heard Hasan Ibn Ismā’īl saying, ‘I heard my father saying, “More than five thousand

people used to gather in the sitting of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. A minimum of five hundred of them used to be writing notes. The rest of them would learn good manners and etiquette from him."'

Ahmad Ibn Salmān Al-Najjād said, "I heard Abū Bakr Al-Mutawwi' saying, "I would frequently go to the gathering of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ for twelve years. During this time, he would read the Musnad to his children. I did not write any Hadīth from him, but I would only look at his ways, mannerisms and etiquette." (Manāqib Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal p.210)

We now mention eleven examples of those people whose just looking at them would remind people of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, and they would benefit from their ways and mannerisms, and whatever they would do. Even after listening about them after a thousand years, we still benefit from them. We can think how much more the people benefitted from them when they were alive, when people looked at them and when they stayed in their company. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ enable us to derive benefit from His righteous and pious servants. Amīn.

'Amr Ibn Maymūn was a great Tābi'ī. He did witness the days of ignorance before Islām, but he did not meet Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He accompanied Sayyidunā Mu'ādh

Ibn Jabal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ from Yemen and then went to stay in Kufa. He was a pious person who would remain content for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. He performed Hajj and 'Umrah a hundred times. His student, Abū Ishāq As-Sabī'ī said, "When people would look at him, they would think of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى." He passed away in 75 A.H. (Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.8 p.109)

Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was a senior Tābi'ī. He was an Imām and jurist. He passed away in 110 A.H. When people would sit with him, they would speak and discuss. He used to laugh and ask them about news that they knew about. However, when he was asked about a ruling, about a matter of Halāl and Harām, his colour would change; it would be as though he was not the same person as before. If the fault of anyone was mentioned in his presence, he would speak of the best qualities which he knew of the person. His two students, 'Hishām Ibn Hassān and Ayyūb Ibn Kaysān said, "We have not seen anyone more desirous of good for the believers than Ibn Sīrīn." (Tabaqāt Al-Kubrā vol.7 p.195)

When he used to remember death, every part of his body would become still. When he would walk past the market, everyone would think of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. (Al-'Ilal wa Ma'rifah Ar-Rijāl vol.1 p.20)

Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was just like Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, when people would look at him, they would think of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ.

Yūnus Ibn 'Ubayd was asked, "Do you know anyone who does deeds like those of Hasan Al-Basrī?" He said, "By Allāh, I do not know anyone who says what he says, how can it be possible for anyone to do deeds like his?" Yūnus Ibn 'Ubayd described him in the following words, "When he came, it was as though he had just returned from burying his close friend. When he sat, it was as though the instruction had been given for his head to be severed. When the fire of Jahannam was mentioned in front of him, it was as though it was created for no one but him."

His companion, Ash'ath Ibn 'Abdullāh said, "When we left the company of Hasan Al-Basrī, we would consider the world to be totally insignificant and lowly." Yūnus Ibn 'Ubayd said, "If a person looked at Hasan Al-Basrī, he would benefit from him even if he did not look at his actions and did not hear him speaking." (Al-Hilyah vol.2 p.158, Al-Bidāyah wan Nihāyah vol.9 p.267)

Matar Al-Warrāq said, "Jābir Ibn Zayd was a jurist and great scholar of the Qur'ān. He was a resident of Basra. When Hasan Al-Basrī came, it was as though he was in the

hereafter and he was relating what he saw there." (Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.2 p.264)

Ja'far Ibn Sulaymān said, "Whenever I experienced any hardness of heart, I would go and look at the face of Muhammad Ibn Wāsi' Al-Basrī. He looked as though he had lost his child." (Tārīkh-al-Islām vol.5 p.159) He was a student of Hasan Al-Basrī, a scholar, ardent worshipper, a righteous person and fighter in the path of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. He passed away in 132 A.H.

Imām Hishām Ibn Hassān Al-Qurdūsī Al-Basrī was among those people who used to cry profusely and engage in the worship of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. He was given a camel, food and other provision so that he could go for Hajj. This was something difficult for his mother. She shook. He cancelled his Hajj journey for the sake of his mother. When she passed away, he would go for Hajj every year. He used to fast everyday except on Fridays and convey the reward to his mother. After she passed away, he would fast continuously. Hammād Ibn Salamah said, "Looking at Hishām Ibn Hassān would cause a person to cry." (Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.1 p.163)

'Abdullāh Ibn Shaudhab Al-Khurāsānī Al-Balkhī was a reliable Muhaddith. He lived in Basra and then moved to Jerusalem. His student, Kathīr Ibn Al-Walīd said, "When I

used to look at ‘Abdullāh Ibn Shaudhab, I would think of the angels.” (Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.5 p.255)

‘Abdullāh Ibn Al-Mubārak رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said regarding ‘Abdul ‘Azīz Ibn Abī Rawwād Al-Makkī that when he used to speak, his tears would flow onto his cheeks. His student, Shu’ayb Ibn Harb said, “Whenever I looked at ‘Abdul ‘Azīz Ibn Abī Rawwād, I would think that he was looking at the Day of Qiyāmah.” In other words, as though he was looking at the people of the hereafter, while they were in it. (Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.6 p.338)

Imām Mālik Ibn Anas رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was the great scholar of Madīnah Munawwarah and head of the Mālikī Madh-hab. He passed away in 176 A.H. Mus’ab Ibn ‘Abdullāh said, “When Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would be mentioned in his presence, the colour of his face would change and he would lower his head. This would cause discomfort to those around him. He was once asked about this. He said, “Had you seen, you would not have objected to what you see me doing. I used to go to Muhammad Ibn Al-Munkadir. He was the leader of the ‘Ulamā’. Whenever we used to ask him about a Hadīth, he would cry so much that we used to feel sorry for him. I used to go to Ja’far Ibn Muhammad (Ja’far As-Sādiq) رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He used to joke and smile in abundance. However, when Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ used to be mentioned in front of him,

his colour would change. Whenever I experienced any hardness of heart, I would go to Muhammad Ibn Al-Munkadir. Many people used to gather around him in order to learn from his ways and good manners. Their looking at him once would be an admonition for them for a few days." (Tartīb Al-Madārik vol.2 p.51)

Fudayl Ibn 'Iyād passed away in 187 A.H. He was a great Imām, ascetic and Muhaddith. Ibrāhim Ibn Al-Ash'ath said, "I have not seen anyone in whose heart Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ was the greatest than Fudayl. When Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ was mentioned in his presence, or if he were to hear the Noble Qur'ān, fear and grief would be seen on his face. His eyes would tear and he would cry to such an extent that those who were there would feel sorry for him." Khālid Ibn Rabāh said, "'Abdullāh Ibn Al-Mubārak said to me, "When I look at Fudayl, my grief would be renewed and would detest myself." He would then cry. (Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.8 p.296)

'Abdullāh Ibn Dāwīd Al-Khuraybī Al-Kūfī was a great leader and worshipper. He passed away in 213 A.H. Wakī' Ibn Al-Jarrāh said about him, "Looking at the face of 'Abdullāh Ibn Dāwūd is an act of worship." (Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.1 p.338)

'Abdullāh Ibn Maslamah Al-Qa'nabī Al-Madanī was a great Muhaddith. He passed away in 221 A.H. When Imām Mālik

رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was told that Al-Qa'nabī has come to Madīnah Munawwarah, he said to the people, "Come, let us stand up for the best person on the surface of the earth." It is said regarding him that if he were to pass by a gathering, the people of the gathering would say, 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh'. (Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.1 p.383)

There were many such personalities in the past. A poet said, 'When a pond remains still, in its pure form and the wind does not move it, the sky appears in it clearly. In the same way, the sun and the stars appear in it. The same is the case with the faces of those given the illumination of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ is seen on the purity of their faces.'

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "His speech increases you in knowledge." The great Sahābī, Sayyidunā Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'arī رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "A gathering of 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ in which I would sit created more confidence in me than doing good deeds for an entire year."

'Ubayd-ullāh Ibn 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Utbah Ibn Mas'ūd was one of the seven jurists of Madīnah Munawwarah. He was also a high-ranking Tābi'ī. Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in Al 'Ilal wa Ma'rifah Ar-Rijāl vol.1 p.345 that he was a very pious person, a comprehensive scholar and a high ranking poet. He passed away in 99 A.H. 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "It is more beloved to me to be in a gathering of

Humble yourself before the truth and submit before it.[2] Adopt punctuality upon the remembrance of Allāh, you will acquire closeness to Him.[1]

'Ubayd-ullāh than the world and whatever it contains." He also said, "By Allāh, I am ready to purchase one night from 'Ubayd-ullāh for a thousand Dīnārs from the Bayt-ul-Māl." The people said, "O Amīr-ul-Mu'minīn, are you saying something like this, when you are very cautious with the Bayt-ul-Māl?" He replied, "Where has your understanding gone? By Allāh, because of his opinion, advice and guidance, thousands in profit goes back to the Bayt-ul-Māl. Speaking to him and those like him sharpens the mind, brings relief to the heart and removes grief."

A poet has said truthfully, 'There is no enjoyment except in conversing with those bestowed with intelligence.'

[1] Majma'-uz-Zawā'id vol.10 p.226, At-Matālib Al-'Aliyah vol.3 p.193

[2] The sign of the pious believers is that when they recognize the truth, they hasten to it and when they know something is false, they hate it and turn away from it.

'Amr Ibn 'Ubayd was faced with a certain matter. He gave his opinion in a certain matter. Wāsil Ibn 'Atā' disagreed with him and 'Amr Ibn 'Ubayd attested to his error. 'Amr Ibn

'Ubayd retracted from his stance and said, "There is no enmity between me and the truth. You are correct. All those who are present bear witness that I retract my first view." The people were very happy with this way, wherein he retracted without any argument. This was used as a poof of his high standing in Dīn.

'Ubayd-ullāh Al-'Anbarī says, 'I humble myself and turn to the truth'

In Al-Hilyah vol.9 p.6 it is mentioned under the biography of 'Ubayd-ullāh Ibn Hasan Al-'Anbarī that he was among the jurists and scholars of Basrah. He also served as the judge of Basrah. His student, 'Abdur Rahmān Ibn Mahdī said, "We participated in a Janāzah. I asked him a ruling concerning a matter. He slipped in his ruling. I was very young at the time. I said to him, "May Allāh correct you. The ruling is not such. The answer is like this…" He lowered his head and after a short while said, "You are correct. I will take your opinion and make myself small. I would rather be a tail in the aspect of truth than be a head in falsehood." May Allāh shower His mercy upon him.

In Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.10 p.22 it is mentioned that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I heard Sufyān Ibn 'Uyaynah saying, "Someone told Mālik Ibn Mighwal 'fear Allāh', so he put his cheek on the ground."

Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ explains the Benefits of Dhikr

[1] The author indicates to a great benefit of the Dhikr of Allāh in this statement. By means of Dhikr, a person gains closeness to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. In Al-Wābil As-Sayyib min Al-Kalim At-Tayyib, Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has mentioned the benefits of Dhikr in a beautiful way. This extensive explanation will encourage both, the negligent and Dhākirīn. I shall mention some of the topics that he has covered. Listen to it well so that you can become from those who remember Allāh in abudance.

Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'There are more than a hundred benefits of the Dhikr of Allāh. It causes Allāh to become pleased, it chases the devil away, it removes worry from a person, it attracts happiness, it brings strength to the heart and body, it brings light to the face and heart, it draws sustenance to a person, it earns awe and sweetness for a person, it brings the love of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ upon a person – which is the essence of Islām, it brings the recognition of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ to a person, the divine ability to turn to Him, closeness to Him, life to the heart and Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ remembers a person.'

Dhikr of Allāh is provision for the hearts and is its soul. It removes the rust of the heart; it wipes away sin and raises the rank of a person. It brings affiliation and takes away loneliness. Dhikr of Allāh is a reminder to a person who is engaged in it, it saves him from the punishment of Allāh, tranquility comes down on him, mercy falls on him, a person is surrounded by angels, it keeps one away from wrong and harmful speech, it brings happiness to a person and the one sitting next to him also becomes happy. Dhikr keeps a person safe from regret on the Day of Qiyāmah. If the Dhikr is done with crying, it becomes a means of him getting the shade of Allāh. Through Dhikr a person will acquire various kinds of reward from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى.'

The Dhikr of Allāh is the easiest and best of all forms of worship. It is the plants and trees of Jannah. It keeps a person safe from forgetting Allāh. It can be done at any time and any condition. There is no act of obedience similar to it. It is a source of light for a person in the life of the world, in his grave and the day when he will rise again. Through Dhikr, the deeds and speech of a person will have a special spiritual light. It is the best way of acquiring the friendship of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. It removes the emptiness of the heart. It dispels worry and uncertainty. It awakens the heart from negligence and results in recognition of Allāh. The person who remembers Allāh is very close to Him, Allāh is with him.

The noblest of the creation in the sight of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ is the one whose tongue remains moist with the Dhikr of Allāh.

Dhikr of Allāh removes hardness of the heart. Nothing can attract the bounties of Allāh and push away His punishment the way Dhikr can. It draws the praise of Allāh and the angels to him. The gatherings of Dhikr are in fact the gatherings of the angels and the gardens of Jannah. All deeds and actions are prescribed for the Dhikr of Allāh to be established. The most virtuous of all those who do good deeds are the ones who engage the most in the Dhikr of Allāh. Punctuality upon Dhikr stands in place of many other acts of worship, even those forms of worship that are physical and monetary in nature.'

The Dhikr of Allāh helps a person in the obedience of Allāh. It makes every difficulty easy for a person. It creates ease in the affairs of a person. The Dhikr of Allāh gives strength to a person in his heart and body. Those who engage in Dhikr are ahead in the race towards the hereafter. Dhikr serves as a barrier between a person and the fire of Jahannam. The angels seek forgiveness for a person in Dhikr. The mountains and other places of the land on which Allāh is remembered boasts over other areas. They even bear testimony in favour of the person who engages in Dhikr. The Dhikr of Allāh gives one a guarantee against hypocrisy.'

'Saying the names and qualities of Allāh is part of the Dhikr of Allāh. Part of Dhikr is to glorify Allāh by saying His names and qualities and absolving Him from all those things that are not appropriate for Him. Part of Dhikr is to inform about the laws of this subject, stating the commands of Allāh and His prohibitions. The best Dhikr is to remember Allāh with the heart and tongue together. Next is the Dhikr in the heart only. Then is the stage of Dhikr with the tongue only. The greatest form of Dhikr is to recite the Qur'ān, then general Dhikr of Allāh and Tasbīh. Then comes the different forms of Du'ā'.

The Dhikr of Allāh Comprises of Many Types

In Fath-ul-Bārī vol.13 p.23, Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'There is nothing specific for the Dhikr of Allāh, in that besides it, nothing else will suffice. In fact, everything that can be referred to as Dhikr will suffice. Part of Dhikr is recitation of the Qur'ān, reciting the Ahādīth and engaging in the knowledge of the Sharī'ah.

The Strength of Dhikr & Its Blessings according to Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes about the benefit of Dhikr and says, 'The sixty-first benefit is that it it gives a person strength. By means of this strength, he does such things that are difficult to do without Dhikr. I saw Shaykh-ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah

رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, the strength in his ways, his speech, his courage and his writings. He would write in a day what others would take a week or more to write. Even the soldiers saw his great strength in fighting during battle.

I heard Shaykh-ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ saying, "Dhikr for the heart is like water to the fish. If the fish leaves the water, what will its condition be?"

Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ acquires Provision through Dhikr

Once Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ went to Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had performed Fajr and then remained engaged in the Dhikr of Allāh until almost half the day passed. He then turned towards Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and said, "This is my breakfast. I did not have any other breakfast. If I did not have this breakfast, all my strength would fall away." Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "On one occasion, he said to me, "I do not leave the Dhikr of Allāh, unless it is with the intention of giving rest and relaxation to my soul. I do this so that through the rest I get, I can engage in Dhikr once again." (Al-Wābil As-Sayyib min Al-Kalām At-Tayyib pp.58-59)

The Different Types of Dhikr according to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ writes regarding the way of Dhikr of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in Zād-ul-Ma'ād vol.2 p.37, 'Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was the most perfect human being in his Dhikr. In fact, every speech of his was linked to the Dhikr of Allāh and associated matters. His issuing a command, a prohibition, and instructions to the Ummah were all a Dhikr of Allāh. His teaching the names, qualities, commands, promises and warnings of Allāh were all Dhikr. When Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ praised and glorified Allāh, spoke about His greatness, and of this was the Dhikr of Allāh. His صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ making Du'ā', pleading before Him and honour for Him were all Dhikr. His silence was also Dhikr of Allāh in his heart.'

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was a person who made the Dhikr of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى all the time and in every matter. His Dhikr used to move with his breathing, when he was standing, sitting, lying down, walking, riding, travelling, disembarking, departing or stopping at any place.'

Permitted & Forbidden Forms of Dhikr

The Dhikr of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى with the tongue, whether silent, aloud, individually or in a group, is permitted with a number of prerequisites and conditions. However, the Dhikr that some people engage in, where there are movements,

chanting in chorus, jumping, going up and down, turning around suddenly and moving one's body forward, running in circles, striking the feet, clapping in order to synchronize with that being sung – all people of a sound temperament will stay away from all of this and an obedient heart will absolve itself from all of this. If the heart of a person was humble and submissive, the other limbs would have also submitted. This is stated by Sa'īd Ibn Al-Musayyib رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, the high-ranking Tābi'ī.

What is more disliked than this is that in the beginning, when these people remember Allāh, they say His name calmly, and one can understand. Then they increase their pace in their Dhikr. They increase the pace in such a way that the listener cannot even understand what they are saying. They are just sounds that increase and decrease in terms of the volume, and sounds that rise and fall. It is just mumbling that is repeated, and movements done repeatedly. They consider all of this to be the Dhikr of Allāh. To Allāh do we belong and to Him is our return. This is great disrespect to Allāh.

Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Admonishes Recital of the Qur'ān with a Tune

A person came to Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and asked him about recital of the Qur'ān with a tune. Imām Ahmad

Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said that it is not permitted. The person asked the reason for impermissibility. Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ asked him his name. He said, "Muhammad." Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Would you like to be addressed as Moohaamad?" (Fath-ul-Qadīr vol.1 p.173)

Dhikr of Allāh is based on showing the greatness of the name of Allāh, showing respect and honour to His name, showing its magnitude and importance. Do not let the wrong ways of people worry you because these people are blind of the understanding of Dīn and of respect to Allāh. Look at any of them. They will dislike their name being taken with a tune, yet he likes it for the name of Allāh and for the recital of the Book of Allāh.

Such types of Dhikr were not known in the best of eras. One cannot offer the excuse that these things are done in order to stop him from being engaged in things besides Allāh. This excuse will be rejected because we know about the pious predecessors. They protected their thoughts and were much more desirous of attaching their hearts to Allāh. However, they would not make such types of movements. If someone had to do these movements in front of them, they would admonish them. These are our leaders and we turn to them. I shall mention some of their statements narrated from them in this regard.

The Statement of Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ about the Prohibited Forms of Dhikr

Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, in Al-I'tisām writes about the gatherings of Dhikr that are forbidden in the Sharī'ah. He says, 'These people have gone beyond the straight path. They gather and one of them recites from the Qur'ān. He has a good voice, and a nice tune. His recitation is similar to singing, which is disliked. Then they say, 'Come, let us engage in the Dhikr of Allāh.' Then they raise their voices and take turns, one group facing one direction and another group facing another direction. They continue in chorus. Then they claim that all this is from the gatherings of Dhikr that are encouraged. They are liars. If this was true, the pious predecessors would have perceived it first, understood it and they would have practiced on it.' (Al-I'tisām vol.1 p.268)

In Bukhārī, there is a Hadīth from Sayyidah Ayesha رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا, 'Abū Bakr رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ came to me when there were two Ansārī girls by me. They were singing some of the songs that the Ansār had sung during the Battle of Bu'āth." Then she said, "These girls were not singers."

Hafiz Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Criticizes the Forbidden Forms of Dhikr

Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Fath-ul-Bārī vol.2 p.368, 'Qurtubī said, 'The meaning of the words of Sayyidah Ayesha رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا

'they were not singers' is that they did not know the art of singing as they other women that know of it. These words from Sayyidah Ayesha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا are a warning against the singing that others teach – singing that arouses passion and stirs emotion that was dormant. If this type of singing and poetry describes the beauties of women, the enjoyment of wine and other Harām actions, then there is no disagreement regarding the prohibited status of such poetry.'

'Whatever the Sūfīs have innovated in this regard, it will fall under those things where there is no difference of opinion about its prohibition. However, many people who are considered pious, following of desires has overpowered them. They display acts of children and mad people. They dance in motions learnt from before and adopt pre-arranged postures. The level of shamelessness is of such a nature that they consider this to be a means of gaining closeness to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. They feel that these are good deeds and it would create a good condition for them. All this is the result of the freethinkers and those who engage in futility. We seek help from Allāh.'

Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says that it would be more appropriate to read the opposite of what they intend and their movements will result in evil consequences.

Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Rejects Forbidden Forms of Dhikr

In Tartīb-ul-Madārik, Qādī Iyādh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in the biography of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ that Tinnīsī said, "We were sitting with Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, his students were seated around him. Someone from Nasībīn said, "We have some people at home who are called Sūfīs. They eat in great abundance, they then start singing Qasīdahs and then stand up to dance." Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ asked, "Are they children?" He said, "No." Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ asked, "Are they insane?" The man replied, "No. they are people of age and are sane." Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I have never heard of Muslims doing this." The man said, "They eat, then they stand up and begin dancing. Some of them hit their heads and others strike their own faces." Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ started to laugh. He then got up and went into his house. His students said to the man, "You have actually been a source of bad news to our teacher. We have sat with him for over thirty years and we have never seen him laughing except today."

Imām Abū Bakr Al-Khallāl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Al-Hath ʻAlā At-Tijārah was As-Sanā'ah wal ʻAmal p.24 writes, ʻIshāq Ibn Sayyār Nasībī informed that ʻAbdul Malik Ibn Ziyād narrated, "We were with Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. I mentioned the Sūfīs of our city and said that they wear beautiful clothing from Yemen,

and this is what they do." He asked, "Are they Muslims?" He then laughed until he literally fell over. This person says, "Some students said, 'What is this? We have not seen a greater trial for our teacher than you. We have never seen him laugh.'"

Imām Qurtubī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Criticizes the Prohibited Forms of Dhikr

Imām Qurtubī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, the Mufassir, says in Al-Jāmi' li Ahkām Al-Qur'ān vol.7 p.365, in the commentary of the verse, 'The believers are those when Allāh is mentioned, their hearts shake and when His verses are read for them, they increase in īmān, and they rely upon their Rabb',

'In this verse, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى speaks about the believers as people who have fear when He is remembered. This is because of the strength of their īmān, their recognition of Allāh and it is as though they are right in front of Him.'

Another verse says, 'And give glad tidings to the humble. When Allāh is remembered, their hearts shake.' Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also says, 'their hearts are tranquil with the remembrance of Allāh'. All of this is dependent on proper recognition of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and reliance of the heart on Him. As for the meaning of the words, 'their hearts shake', this refers to fear for the punishment of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

There is no contradiction between this shaking of the heart and experiencing tranquility. This meaning is mentioned in the verse, 'Allāh revealed the best speech, a Book, it has mutashābih verses, oft-repeated, the skins of those who fear their Rabb shiver, then their skins and hearts soften to the Dhikr of Allāh'. The hearts softening refers to the condition where they experience tranquility in their conviction in Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, even though they may fear Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ.

This is the condition of those who recognize Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ fully; they fear His power and punishment. This is unlike the ignorant masses and lowly innovators. They scream, shout and bray like donkeys. Therefore, it is said to the person who does this type of action and feels that this is ecstacy of love and a form of humility, 'you have not reached the condition of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٰٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ, nor that of the Sahābah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ in their recognition of Allāh, or their fearing Allāh, showing honour for His greatness and grandeur'. Despite their lofty status, when they were admonished, they would understand whatever Allāh said to them and they would cry out of the fear of Allāh. For this reason, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ speaks about those who have recognized Him, when they hear Him spoken about, and when they hear His book being recited, they are described as follows, 'When they hear whatever has been revealed to the Rasūl, you see their eyes tearing because of the truth that they recognized. They say,

'O our Rabb, we believe, so record us among those who bear witness.' (Sūrah Mā'idah)

This is a description of their state and it translates their words. Therefore, whoever will not be like this, he will not be on their way. Therefore, whoever wants to follow someone, he should follow them, take their path. He who wishes to take the path of the mad and the insane, he will be in the worst condition. Madness does come in many forms.

Imām Muslim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentions a narration from Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ that some people posed a few questions to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. They asked many questions. One day, he صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ came; he ascended the pulpit and said, "Ask me. Whatever you ask, I shall explain to you as long as I stand here." When the people heard this, they stopped and feared that something grave was going to happen. Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "I started looking to the right and to the left. Everyone covered his face and was crying."

Imām Tirmidhī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentions a narration from Sayyidunā Irbād Ibn Sāriyah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, "Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ delivered an extremely eloquent sermon. The eyes shed tears and the hearts trembled." This Hadīth does not say that the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ started to shout, dance, stamping the ground, nor did they stand up.

Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Explains the Wrongs of the Forbidden Forms of Dhikr

The question on loud Dhikr has been posed since the eighth century, with regards to those who sit in a circle, listen to melodious recitals, jumping, and moving in a certain motions. The great scholar, Imām Abū Ishāq Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ poses this question and gives the reply to it in Al-I'tisām vol.1 pp.264-285. He explains in great detail and expounds to a significant degree. He clarifies the dangers of this by giving the proofs and the reason. Study this, it will enlighten the heart and mind. It is the essence and summary of knowledge.

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'If only those who engage in these forms of Dhikr, those who claim that these movements are permitted, or that they do not transgress the bounds of permissibility, if they do not adhere to the views of the Imāms who forbid these movements, they should at least consider these views and it will cause some doubt in their minds regarding the permissibility of it. They should give up all these things based on the statements of the 'Ulamā', that is, Harām. A Sūfī, according to their definition, is a person who stays away from doubtful things and also leaves out permitted things out of fear that he would fall into committing Makrūh actions, let alone falling into

Harām. Allāh guides one who asks Him for guidance. O Allāh, guide us towards that which You are pleased with.

The Prohibition of Dhikr in the Forbidden Way

It is necessary for me to point out to one more thing. This is something widespread in many gatherings of Dhikr in this time. People say the word 'Allāh' repeatedly. They say it in such a way that it is understood in the beginning, then they start saying it rapidly, joining the letters. They say it so fast that the word is included in the previous one, and they cut off the letters. The name of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى becomes a sound that cannot be understood and is repeated with such speed that nothing is understood. This form of Dhikr is Harām. We seek the protection of Allāh from those who engage in this type of Dhikr.

The Correct Tasawwuf in Poetry

Imām Abū 'Abdullāh As-Siqillī said in a poem, 'Tasawwuf does not entail wearing hot woolen clothing, which has patches. It does not entail crying, when singers start singing. It does not entail shouting, dancing and music. Tasawwuf does not entail pretending to have fainted as though one has become mad. Tasawwuf entails becoming pure and clean. You should follow the truth, the Qur'ān and the Dīn. You must always be fearful of Allāh, have remorse and be grieved at your sins.'

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Those who will be sitting with Allāh on the Day of Qiyāmah will be those who submit and are humble, those who fear, and remember Allāh in abundance."[1]

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[1] Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'I have not come across this narration in the books that I have checked. And Allāh knows best.

Hāfiz Ibn Rajab رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says about the famous Hadīth, 'When you pass by the gardens of Jannah, then indulge in them.' The Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ said, "What are the gardens of Jannah?" He said, 'Gatherings of Dhikr.' Whenever Sayyidunā Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to mention this Hadīth, he used to say, "I do not mean the gatherings of the story tellers, but I refer to the gatherings of Dhikr." Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ explained a similar meaning. Ibn Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ narrated this from them in Al Qussās wa Al-Mudhak-kirīn p.129.

The Statement of Sayyidunā Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ on the Virtue of Dhikr

When the time of demise of Sayyidunā Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ approached, he said, "Welcome to death, welcome to the visitor who came to meet me during a time of poverty. The person who regrets will not succeed. O Allāh, you know that I would not like to remain in this world for the flowing of rivers or for the planting of trees, but I used to like

staying here so that I could endure the long night, the thirst of midday heat and to sit in front of the 'Ulamā' in the gatherings of Dhikr."

Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said that Proper Understanding of Dīn is part of Worship

Sayyidunā Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'arī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ went to Sayyidunā 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ after Ishā Salāh, Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ asked, "What has brought you here?" He said, "I came to speak to you." Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "At this time?" He said, "It is a matter of Fiqh." So Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ sat with him and spoke to him for a long time. Sayyidunā Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'arī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then said, "Amīr-ul-Mu'minīn, let us now perform Salāh." Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "We are in Salāh already." (Kanz-ul-'Ummāl vol.5 p.228)

Therefore, the meaning of 'gatherings of Dhikr' in this case refers to the gatherings of knowledge. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says, 'Ask those of knowledge if you do not know.' (Sūrah Nahl)

The Gatherings of Halāl & Harām are Gatherings of Dhikr

Atā' Al-Khurāsānī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "The gatherings of Dhikr are the gatherings of Halāl and Harām. Meaning, gatherings where the rulings of how should one trade, how should one

perform Salāh, how a person should fast, how a person should marry, how one should divorce, the method of Hajj and all other similar rulings."

Abū As-Sawwār Al-Adawī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was in a gathering where matters of knowledge were being discussed. A youngster was sitting with them. The youngster said, "Say Subhānallāh and Alhamdulillāh." Abū As-Sawwār became angry with him and said, "May mercy fall on you, what were we busy with?" (Az-Zuhd p.316)

Ad-Dārimī narrates from Wahb Ibn Munabbih, "A gathering where knowledge is discussed is more beloved to me than Salāh performed during the same time. Someone in the gathering will probably hear something that will benefit him for a year or for the rest of his life."

Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "Studying is Salāh in reality."

The Gatherings of Knowledge are the Gatherings of Dhikr

The gatherings of Dhikr include the gatherings of knowledge in which the Tafsīr of the Qur'ān is delivered, where the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is narrated, where understanding of Dīn is imparted. Such gatherings are superior to the gatherings of the Dhikr of Allāh, where He is

Advise others for the sake of Allāh, His Rasūl and for the Muslims. Consult those who fear Allāh in all you affairs.[1] Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'From His servants, those who have

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praised and glorified. This is because there is a clear difference between something that is Fard 'Ayn and something that is Fard Kifāyah. As for Dhikr, it is not more than optional.

The verbal Dhikr is optional. It becomes compulsory at times. However, to know the commands of Allāh, what He is pleased with, and what he is displeased with, it is obligatory upon a person who needs to know. For this reason, the Hadīth states, "Seeking knowledge is compulsory upon every Muslim."

[1] Advice of Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ: These words are part of advice given by Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ. The entire advice is, "Do not bother about what does not concern you. Remain aloof from your enemy. Be watchful of your enemy, except the one who is trustworthy. No one amongst the people can compare to a trustworthy person. There is no trustworthy person except the one who fears Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. Do not befriend an open sinner because he will cause you to fall into sin. Do not share your secrets with him. Consult with those who fear Allāh in all your matters."

knowledge fear Allāh.' (Sūrah Fātir) Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Dīn is advice."[1]

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[1] Sahih Muslim vol.2 p.36

Good & Successful Advice

You must know that the words and tone you adopt in your advice to some people will be different from the words and tone that you will use when advising a ruler, a judge, a father or an elderly person, in case any of them err. Using stern words when addressing someone is not always the best method in giving advice, nor is it the most useful. It is not the most guiding towards Dīn, nor would it absolve you to the maximum degree in fulfilling your responsibility.

Ibn Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ gives Advice to Al-Mustadī Billāh

See Ibn Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. Look at how he gave advice to the Khalīfah. He had a high level of intelligence; he used a beautiful manner of address and advice. One day, he spoke in the gathering of the 'Abbāsid Khalīfah, Al-Mustadī Billāh and he mentioned the advice of Shaybān Ar-Rā'ī to the Khalīfah Hārūn Ar-Rashīd. He then said, "O Amīr-ul-Mu'minīn, if I speak, I fear your anger at me and if I remain silent, then I fear the anger of Allāh upon you. However, I give preference of my fear for you because of my love for you over my fear of you. The words 'Fear Allāh' from a person who gives advice are better than the words of a

person who says, 'You are from the lineage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, you will be forgiven.' (Tabaqāt Al-Mufassirīn vol.1 p.273)

See how eloquent these words are. He used a subtle expression that was full of respect. He said, 'If I speak', 'If I remain silent', and he left out 'in advising you'. Moreover, 'the words of an advisor' were used, not, 'the words of an advisor to you'. He said, 'than the words of a person who says', instead of 'than the words of a person who says to you'. In each of these sentences, he left out 'you'. He spoke in general terms because his purpose was fulfilled in this way. In the last sentence only, he says, 'you'.

The Method of Commanding the Good & Forbidding Evil with a Ruler

If you advise the ruler, then do not forget the guidelines given by Sufyān Thaurī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, "No one should command the ruler to do a good deed except the person who has knowledge with regards to what he commands, he has knowledge regarding whatever he forbids, he is courteous regarding what he commands, he is courteous regarding that which he forbids, he is just in what he orders and is just in what he forbids." (Hilyah Al-Auliyā' vol.6 p.379)

You must know that the one who has advised you; he has shown love to you.[1]

The Advice of a Songstress to the Ruler

[1] Look at the beauty of this advice. It turned Harām towards Halāl. It turned sinning towards obedience. There was a songstress in the time of Malik Shah Seljuqī. It has been narrated about him that he was staying at Rayy.

A songstress was brought to him. He enjoyed her singing. He even wanted to have relations with her. She said to him, "O King, I am very worried about this beautiful face that it should be punished with the fire of Jahannam. Indeed the Halāl way is easy. There are few words between it and Harām. The King said, "You are right." He called for the judge who got them married. He then had relations with her. She survived him after he passed away. May Allāh have mercy on both of them." (Wafayāt-ul-A'yān vol.2 p.124)

O Allāh, how true was her words. Her advice was great and her advice was phenomenal. Her obedience was complete and it had an effect on the heart of a believer. The advice took root in the heart of the one who adhered to it. O Allāh, let us suffice on that which you have made lawful so that we do not need to turn to that which is forbidden. Let us suffice on Your obedience so that we do not need anything that entails Your disobedience. Let us suffice with Your grace

The person who has flattered you has deceived you.[1] The person who does not accept your advice is not your true brother. Sayyidunā ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “There is no good in a nation that does not give advice. There is no good in a nation that does not like those who give advice.”[2] Give preference

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from all those besides You. Save us from the pleasures of desires, these are the causes of ruin and destruction.

[1] The person who sees you turning away from the obedience of Allāh, yet he is pleased with your action, he does not advise you, nor does he criticize you, then definitely he has deceived you. Count such a person to be amongst your worst enemies. This is because this is the stance of the enemy, not the stance of a brother that has a liking for you.

[2] Sayyidunā ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “May Allāh have mercy on the person who presented the faults of ‘Umar to him.” From this, we learn that Sayyidunā ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to consider the person who comes to him and gives advice and shows him his faults as a gift. The person who gave the gift is deserving of Du’ā’.

Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ Advises to Remain in the Company of a Person who gives Advice

A person came to Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and asked, “What should we do about those who cause us to fear, to the extent

to the truth at every moment, you will acquire benefit.[1] Stay away from useless and vain things, you will remain with peace and safety.[1]

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that our hearts fly out of our chests?" Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "By Allāh, remaining in the company of those who cause you to become fearful until peace comes over you is much better than remaining with those who continue to tell you that you are safe until fear comes over you." (Hilyah Al-Auliyā' vol.2 p.150)

The Virtue of Truthfulness & Its Effect

[1] Hafiz Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said in Manāqib Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ p.350, from Tamīm Ar-Rāzī, 'I heard Abū Zur'ah Ar-Rāzī saying that he asked Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, "How did you escape from the sword of Al-Mu'tasim and from the whip of Al-Wāthiq?" He said, "If honesty were to be placed on a wound, the wound would be cured."

In Adāb-ush-Shar'iyyah vol.2 p.200, Ibn Muflih says that Abū Bakr Marwadhī said, "Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was asked, 'how did people reach the level where they were praised by others?' He said, "By means of speaking the truth."

Iyās Ibn Mu'āwiyah Al-Muzanī, the judge of Basrah, said, "The most honourable trait of a person is truthfulness in speech. The person who is devoid of truthfulness is deprived of the most honourable characteristic." (Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah vol.9 p.336)

[1] This means that one shold stay away from everything that does not concern you. The word 'fudūl' is the plural of 'fadl'. The plural word was then used to refer to all those things in which there is no good for one. Based on this, the person who engages in those things that do not concern him is called a fudūlī. This has been made into a proper noun to show a person who has this type of behavior and speech. The plural is thus used as a singular. The jurists refer to the person as a fudūlī when he uses his influence over something that he does not own, nor has he been made responsible for it.

The Difficulty of Saving Ones Self from Useless Things

Fudūl happens in everything. Many are affected by it. It is very difficult to stay away from it, except the one whom Allāh gives the ability to. Rabāh Ibn Yazīd Al-Lakhmī was amongst the reliable 'Ulamā and pious ones. He made made great effort and possessed lofty character traits. He was well known for his piety and abundant worship. His Du'ā' would

be readily accepted by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. He was born in 134 A.H and passed away in 172 A.H. he lived for thirty-eight years. He said, "I made great effort to leave out sin for one year, then another year. I was able to then control. I then made effort for my tongue to leave out all that which was of no concern to me. I was able to bring it under control after fifteen years." Abū 'Uthmān Sa'īd Ibn Muhammad Al-Haddād said, "I am convinced that this striving of his started from the time he became mature because he passed away at the age of thirty-eight. He went through so much striving and sacrifice."(Tabaqāt 'Ulamā' Ifrīqiyyah wa Tūnis p.124)

The Praise of Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ for Abstaining from Useless Things

Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "There are four things which increase intelligence in a person; abstaining from futile talk, using the Miswāk, sitting in the company of the pious, and sitting in the company of the 'Ulamā'." (Zād-ul-Ma'ād vol.3 p.417)

Abstaining from those things that does not concern you is very difficult. The Author رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ repeats his warning against it in various places in the book. In every place, he explains the different forms of fudūl, the dangers of it, the consequences of it and the effects of it. By Allāh, he is very sincere in this regard and has given good advice about it.

Truthfulness takes one towards piety[1] and piety takes one to the pleasure of Allāh. Lies take a person to sin,[1] and sin

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You must remain far from all types of fudūl so that you can be safe and secure. The result of fudūl is remorse and regret. May Allāh help me and you and protect us. He alone looks after the pious.

[1] The meaning of this is that it takes a person towards good deeds. In Al-Hilyah vol.2 p.359, Ja'far Ibn Sulaymān Ad-Dab'ī said, "I heard Mālik Ibn Dīnār saying, 'Truthfulness and dishonesty wage war with each other in the heart, until one expels the other. Truthfulness starts weak just as a date palm does. A single branch comes out first. If it is broken by a child, the source is destroyed. If a goat eats it, the source will be destroyed. If it is watered, it will spread. If it is watered further, it will spread further until it grows a strong root. Then it will give shade, then fruit that is eaten. Similarly, truthfulness and honesty start weak in the heart. If a person looks for it, Allāh will increase it. If a person looks for it more, Allāh will increase it more. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى makes it a source of blessing for the person his speech becomes medication for those who are in error."

Mālik Ibn Dīnār then said, "Have you not seen them?" "By Allāh, we have seen them. They are Hasan Al-Basrī, Sa'īd Ibn

Jubayr and those like them. Allāh causes the speech of a single one amongst them to enliven large groups of others."

[1] This means that it causes a person to commit sins and wrong deeds. Sayyidah Ayesha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا says, "There was no deed more wicked in the sight of the Sahābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ than falsehood. The moment Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ came to know that anyone had some dishonesty in him, he would work on the person until he repented." (Al 'Ilal wa Ma'rifah Ar-Rijāl vol.1 p.406)

The Evil of Lies and Permitted Types

In the manuscript of Al Taymiyyah in Usūl-ul-Fiqh, it is mentioned that there is a difference amongst the people regarding the evil of lies, is it repugnant in itself, or is it dependent upon the situation? Most 'Ulamā' are of the view that the evil is in accordance to the situation. Therefore, wherever the Sharī'ah has given permission, it will be taken as acceptable.

A group of scholars have the view that lies are repugnant in itself. According to this group, it is repugnant even in situations where the Sharī'ah has permitted it. However, it removes something that is even more evil, so a person has been given a choice. Ibn 'Aqīl رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says that this view is something far-fetched. In the light of both views, as long as

one can use some vague speech in place of lies, lies will remain Harām.

Shaykh Taqī-ud-Dīn Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "This matter is based on the evil in it on a rational basis. Those who reject say, 'No one has the right to pass any decision besides Allāh. Therefore, something will be considered to be acceptable if the Sharī'ah declares it so. The Sharī'ah made it so in accordance to the situation. He who affirms the opinion of rational evil and considers the command in accordance to the situation will consider dishonesty to be evil and repugnant in itself.'

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'The following Hadīth bears testimony to the view of the majority of the 'Ulamā', Umm Kulthūm bint 'Uqbah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا said, "A person who reconciles between two people is not a liar. He conveys good and he says good."

'Allāmah Munāwī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said in the explanation of the above Hadīth, 'Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said that the one who reconciles between people is not a liar on the basis of his objective. Such matters force a person to say that which is more than necessary and to go beyond the truth in order to bring about peace and remove harm. A minor concession is therefore given for a little mischief with the hope that it would bring about reconciliation.'

brings the anger of Allāh. Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās

Speaking lies in order to reconcile between two people entails conveying some good and nice words about one person to another person, even though he may not have heard it from him. He does this with the objective of reconciling between them.

Lying in war means showing ones self to have an abundance of strength, speaking in a way that would give strength to one’s companions, whilst misleading the enemy.

Lying to one’s wife means making promises and her hope, showing more than what is in the heart – in order to continue a good relationship and to reform her character.

Imām Nawawī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “The ‘ulamā’ have explained different forms of lies that are permitted. The best I have seen is the different points presented by Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. ‘Speech is a means to fulfil one’s objectives. Every objective is praiseworthy if it is based on the criteria of the Sharī’ah. One can attain this objective through honesty as well as dishonesty. Dishonesty is unlawful in it if there is no need for it. However, if one can attain his objective through dishonesty but not through honesty, then dishonesty will be lawful if it is for a lawful purpose and compulsory if it is for a compulsory purpose.’

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا says, "Do not speak about that which does not concern you. Abstain from many things that does not concern you. Do not dispute with a foolish and forbearing person.[1] Speak about your brother in the same way you would like to be spoken about. Act like one who will be rewarded for good and will be taken to task for evil.[2]

Show gratitude to Allāh continuously and curtail your hopes. Visit the graves with presence of heart;[3] it will remind you of death. Think about resurrection with your heart.[4]

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[1] This means that you should not argue and dispute because one will not acquire any goodness from it.

[2] Nuzhatul Majālis vol.2 p.250 has a text like this, of the words of Sayyidunā Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا

[3] Sayyidunā Abū Dharr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Visit the graves, it will remind you of the hereafter. Bathe the deceased because seeing to the needs of a lifeless body is a great admonishment. Perform Salāh over the dead, it could cause you grief. A person afflicted with grief will be under the shade of Allāh on the Day of Qiyāmah." (Mustadrak Hākim vol.4 p.330)

Thinking of the Punishment of the Hereafter with the Heart will cause one to Think Differently

[4] This is not a simple matter. This is such a thing that breaks many hearts when thinking over it. This is when it is done with complete thought of the hereafter. This happened to many of the pious predecessors.

The student of Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, Ar-Rabī' Ibn Khaytham رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ would say to him رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ when he would go to him, "By Allāh, if Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ were to see you, he would certainly love you. Whenever I see you, I think of those who are truly subservient and humble before Allāh." Another narration states that when he used to see Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, he used to recite, 'Give glad tidings to those who are humble.' (Sūrah Hajj, 34)

The Great Tābi'ī, Rabī' Ibn Khuthaym falls Unconscious

In Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb, Hāfiz Dhahabī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ has written that Rabī' Ibn Khuthaym and Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were gone towards the banks of the Tigris. They passed by ironmongers. When Rabī' Ibn Khuthaym saw the fire, heard the sound and observed the flames, he read the verse, 'When it will see them from a distant place, they will hear it raging and roaring.' (Sūrah Furqān, 12)

He recited this verse and fell unconscious. The time for Zuhr came, Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas’ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ called, but he did not respond. Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas’ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then went and led the people in Salāh. He returned and called for him a second time. Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas’ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ led the people in ‘Asr Salāh. He returned and called a third time, but he did not respond. Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas’ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ went and led the people for Maghrib Salāh. He returned and called, but he did not respond. He stayed in this unconscious state until the early part of the morning, and the cold of the morning awakened him.

‘Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ is affected by Listening about the Hereafter

In Tārīkh-e-Baghdad it is mentioned by Nu’aym Ibn Hammād, ‘When ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ used to read the Riqāq chapters, he used to become like an ox or a cow that has just been slaughtered due to crying. None of us had the courage to go near him or to ask him anything.’

The Heart of Ibn Wahb Shakes when hearing about the Hereafter

‘Abdullāh Ibn Wahb Al-Qurashī Al-Misrī was the companion of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. He passed away in 197 A.H. Yunus says, “Ibn Wahb said, ‘the students of Hadīth requested me to relate to them some of the descriptions of Jannah and

Sayyidunā Abū Dharr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "Act as though you can see Allāh,[1] and count yourself amongst the dead. Know that evil is not forgotten and good does not end.[2]

Jahannam. I do not know whether I can do it or not." He then sat down in front of them and read a few Ahādīth describing Jahannam. He fell unconscious. Water was sprinkled on his face but he did not gain consciousness. Someone said, "Read the Ahādīth describing Jannah." He still did not come round. He stayed in this condition for twelve days. A doctor was called. When the doctor examined him, he said, "This is a man whose heart has broken." He then passed away. May Allāh have mercy on him. (Tartīb-ul-Madārik vol.3 p.241)

[1] In such a way as though you see Allāh

You will all Become News, so keep your News Good

[2] You must know that all your deeds are safeguarded and remembered by people and by Allāh. You must therefore do good deeds so that you are remembered with good by people and by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. A great sage, Aktham Ibn Sayfī At-Tamīmī travelled with a hundred people of his tribe in order to meet Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ so that they can embrace Islām. He passed away whilst on journey, after he embraced Islām. His companions reached Madīnah and embraced Islām. He said to them, "You are people who convey news, so

Know well that a little that makes you independent is much better than a lot that will cause you to transgress.[1] Beware of the supplication of the oppressed.[2]

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make sure that you give good news by doing good deeds." His words are very true.

Ibn Durayd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'A man will be news after he dies. Therefore, become good news for those who listen.'

[1] Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Beware of all that keeps you occupied with the world, because this world has many things that will keep you occupied. When a person opens a door of being occupied, it will open ten other doors of other occupations." (Hilyah Al-Auliyā' vol.2 p.153)

Qatādah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "As soon as a nation enjoys many bounties, its enemies will increase." (Al-'Ilal wa Ma'rifah Ar-Rijāl vol.1 p.174)

The Du'ā' of an Oppressed Person will be Accepted, even if he is an Unbeliever

[2] This is because such a Du'ā' will be readily accepted by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, irrespective of whether it is made by a disobedient person, a sinner, a polytheist or even an unbeliever. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'The supplication of the disbelievers is nothing but in vain.' (Sūrah Ra'd, 14)

In this verse, their supplications refer to their supplications to their idols. This is clear from the context. It could also refer to them asking Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ to save them from Jahannam. As for the du'ā' of the oppressed person in this world, it is accepted by Allāh, no matter who makes it. The proof of this is in the Hadīth. Sayyidunā Anas Ibn Mālik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Fear the du'ā' of the oppressed person. There is no barrier between it and Allāh." (Bukhārī, Muslim)

A similar narration is in Musnad Ahmad, Abū Ya'lā, 'fear the du'ā' of an oppressed person, even if he might be a disbeliever because there is no barrier for this du'ā.' This means that it will be accepted. There is nothing that will stop it from being accepted by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ.

Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "The du'ā' of an oppressed person is accepted. If such a person is a sinner, he will have to answer for his sin."(Musnad Ahmad)

There is an incident about the minister Yahyā Ibn Khālid Al-Barmakī. He was well known for generosity.

The 'Abbāsid Khalīfah, Al-Mahdī, sent his son, Hārūn Ar-Rashīd to Yahyā Ibn Khālid Al-Barmakī for training. Hārūn Ar-Rashīd lived in the house of Yahyā and the wife of Yahyā

fed him, together with her own son, Al-Fadl. Through this, Hārūn Ar-Rashīd became the foster son of Yahyā. When Hārūn Ar-Rashīd was appointed Khalīfah, he recognized the right that Yahyā had over him. He appointed him as his minister and showed great respect to him. Hārūn Ar-Rashīd would call him 'father'. Hārūn Ar-Rashīd gave him the authority to issue laws. The Barmakīs fell out of Hārūn Ar-Rashīd's favour later on. Hārūn Ar-Rashīd became very angry with Yahyā. Yahyā was sentenced to life imprisonment and his son Ja'far was killed.

When in prison, Ja'far said to Yahyā, "O my father, after having the power to issue orders, and the vast wealth that we possessed, time has now put us in chains. We wear rough clothing and are in jail." His father said, "O my son, it is probably the du'ā' of an oppressed person. It crept away at night whilst we were unaware, whilst Allāh was not unaware of it."

'Many people lived a life of comfort whilst time showered its bounties on them. Time then stopped showering its bounties for some time and caused them to cry tears of blood when it spoke.'

'Allāmah Taftāzānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in the commentary of the twenty-fourth Hadīth of the commentary of the forty Ahādīth of Nawawī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. One of the rulers of Transoxiana,

Prepare whatever you need for the hereafter,[1] complete your preparation.[1] Become an advisor in your own affairs

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Amīr Nūh Ibn Asad Ibn Sāmān, had imposed kharāj tax on the people of Samarqand. The Amīr gathered all the Imāms, the elders and seniors of the city and read the letter to them. Abū Mansūr Māturīdī said to the person who brought the letter, "You have conveyed the letter of the Amīr. Now take the reply to him and say, "And another injustice against us so that we may increase our du'ā' at night." They then went away. After a few days, they found him dead with a spear in his stomach. The following words were written on it, 'He rebelled, there are arrows waiting for rebellion. These arrows came to him from the hands of death and decree. Arrows of hands that are submissive in the early dawn time. These arrows are shot from a bow on an odd night.'

I saw something similar to this written on the wall of the palace in the Syrian Republic in Damascus. It was written on the highest wall that was wooden. 'History preserved the names of those who beautified the lands with justice. It has also informed us of the unjust. Their names have become like a proverb.'

[1] Reform and correct whatever actions you need in the hereafter

and do not make people your advisors.[2] Understand your matters and awake from your slumber[3] because you will be asked about your life.[4]

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[1] Complete and perfect whatever provision you take to the hereafter

[2] The following statement is attributed to Sayyidunā ʻAlī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, ʻO son of Ādam, advise yourself regarding your wealth, do those deeds that would love to be done after you." (Nahj-ul-Balāgha vol.4 p.145)

I gather my wealth by my Rabb and I advise my Son regarding my Rabb

In Tārīkh-ul-Islām of Dhahabī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ (vol.4 p.200), it is mentioned under the biography of Muhammad Ibn Ka'b Al-Qurazī that he had a number of properties in Madīnah Munwwarah. Someone told him, "Keep this wealth for your children." He said, "No, I shall store it as a treasure for myself by my Rabb and I shall keep Allāh as a treasure for my son."

[3] From your negligence and from remaining in slumber about the hereafter

[4] Sayyidunā Abū Barzah Aslamī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "A person will not be able to move on the Day of Qiyāmah until he is questioned about four

Sayyidunā Abū Umāmah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "If a person can understand whatever his Rabb has given, it will be better for him than Jihād. Know well that if a person makes the hereafter his concern, Allāh will suffice him his worldly matters. It is stated in a Hadīth, "Free yourself from the concerns of the world as much as you can, because he whose greatest concern is this world, Allāh will create more concerns,[1] and He will put poverty before his eyes,[2] he whose hereafter is his greatest concern, Allāh will gather his affairs for him, and He will place contentment in his heart. A person will not turn to Allāh with his heart, except that Allāh will cause the hearts of the believers to turn to him with mercy and compassion.[3]

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things. His life, as to how he spent it. His knowledge, to what extent did he practice on it. His wealth, how did he earn it and where did he spend it. His body, how did he use it." (Tirmidhī)

[1] Allāh will give him abundant property and he will become negligent of the hereafter

[2] He will be made such that he will always feel himself to be poor and deprived

[3] This is quoted by Suyūtī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in Al-Jāmi' As-Saghīr. He said that Tabrānī mentions it from Abū Dāwūd. Munāwī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says that Mundhirī classified it as Da'īf and Haythamī says

O my brother, do not have doubt about the Qur'ān.[1] Do not argue in matters of Dīn.[1] Beware of setting limits for Allāh[1]

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that Muhammad Ibn Sa'īd Ibn Hassān is Kadh-dhāb. Others have mentioned the same. Based on this, the narration is extremely Da'īf.

[1] This means a doubt in it being the word of Allāh. Alternatively, it could mean that one debates whether it is eternal or not. Or, debating about the Mutashābih verses. It could also mean that one denies some verses using other verses by creating doubt about them.

The person studying the Qur'ān must try to reconcile the verses and bring them together as much as possible. Some parts of the Qur'ān verify other parts. If a person has a doubt in some place, and he cannot reconcile the verses, then he should base it on his deficient understanding. He should hand it over to those who have knowledge, that is, Allāh and His Rasūl ﷺ.

In Musnad Ahmad, Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "The Qur'ān was revealed in seven Ahruf. Having doubts in the Qur'ān is disbelief." He said this thrice. "Whatever you know, practice on it and whatever you do not know, refer it to those who know." (Fayd ul Qadīr vol.6 p.265)

[1] To debate and argue, and trying to overcome others. The word is drawn from the example of a person turning his rope; both sides do this in order to make their argument stronger. He does it in order to move the person away from his view so that his own opinion can gain strength. This is disliked. If a person speaks with justice, then it is correct. Alternatively, if his objective is to show the truth, then it will be fine. However, such people are very few nowadays.

The Difference between Arguing and Explaining

The difference between jadl (arguing) and ifhām (explaining) is that you argue with him to overpower him, so you become a mujādil. If you try to explain and try to make your view attractive, or at least please him, then you will be a mufhim. You will feel that you will be attracted to his views and thoughts, he will like you and he will attest to your merit.

Jadl is disliked in the Sharī'ah

Ibn Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Al-Mutashābih fil Qur'ān p.11, 'You must know that the beauty of the Islām of a person lies in him leaving those things that do not concern him. When Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ intends evil for a person, He tests him through involving him in disputes. When Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ wills good for a person, He grants him the divine ability to do good deeds. If Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ takes away your tongue and

returns your heart to you, then He has shown kindness to you. If He gives your tongue to you, then you will be in great calamity.'

Rasūlullāh ﷺ warned against falling into Jadl. He said that it is a means of people being turned away from guidance towards deviation. Sayyidunā Abū Umāmah رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "A nation cannot fall into misguidance after guidance unless they start arguing." He then recited, 'They bring examples only to dispute. They are a people who argue.' (Sūrah Zukhruf)

In Musnad Ahmad, Makhūl narrates from Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "A person cannot be a true believer until he abandons arguing even if he may be correct." (The chain of this narration is Da'īf)

Sayyidunā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنهما narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Do not argue with your brother." (Tirmidhī) Sayyidunā Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "The one who leaves out arguing despite being correct will have a place built for him in the centre of Jannah." (Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah)

This is because arguing and disputes leads to hatred and aversion. It causes ill feeling between the disputing parties and it brings loneliness to others. It is for this reason that

the person who gives it up will be rewarded well by Allāh. It is necessary to stay away from it.

One person started to argue and dispute with Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He said to the person, "I know what you want. I can argue in a much better way than you can. However, I do not want to argue and dispute." (Tabaqāt Ibn Sa'd vol.7 p.195)

Ten Things form the Etiquette of Disputation

I saw in a handwritten book, Al-Intisār fi Masā'il Al Kibār written by Mahfūz Ibn Ahmad Al-Kalwadhānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He was a great Hanbalī scholar of his time. Some scholars would write advice, valuable points on the pages of the books. They would do this hurriedly, so that it does not slip the mind and so that whenever they see the book, they will remember.

'Part of the etiquette of disputation is that a person came to a wise Imām and said, 'I want to debate with you.' He replied, 'I accept, but you must bind yourself to ten things. The first is that you should not become angry. Secondly, do not put yourself into difficulty. Thirdly, do not be haughty. Fourthly, do not use your own view. Fifthly, do not laugh. Sixthly, do not make your claim your proof. Seventhly, when we speak, then our objective should be the truth. Eighthly, whatever is in our minds, we should adopt it; it must be

and be amongst those regarding whom Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ said, 'When the ignorant ones speak to them, they say, 'Peace to you'. (Sūrah Furqān, 63)

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gauged for acquaintance. Ninthly, we must take the truth to be our lost treasure; we should not try to overpower others. Tenthly, when I speak to you, then do not turn to others.' Was Salām

[1] This refers to setting a limit for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and going into His qualities, like Tashbīh, Ta'tīl and so on. Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Say, 'I believe in Allāh, without similarity, I believe in Him without any example.' I will be your guarantor on the Day of Qiyāmah. Therefore, it is necessary that you believe that your deity is not similar to anything, nor is there anything similar to Him.

I do not speak to you in the light of knowledge or scholastic theology, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ said, 'There is nothing like Him'. This verse is sufficient to refute the Mushab-biha and the Mujassimah. For the Mu'attilah, the verse, 'and He is All-Hearing All-Knowing' suffices. There is nothing more harmful for man than to delve and ponder in the being of Allāh. It is said, 'ponder over the bounties of Allāh, do not think about the being of Allāh'.

Hold on firmly to etiquette, stay far away from desires and anger, and do those actions that will be the means of being alert.[1]

The Image of the Negligence of Man through Worldly Trials

1 The trials and temptations are captivating; this will become a means of negligence regarding the hereafter for you. It will cause you to forget about your end. It is necessary for you to learn and get the causes and means of being vigilant, so that you can remain safe from the house of deception.

How true was Ibn Al-Muqaffa', he explained an example of the negligence of man regarding the hereafter. He says that man becomes negligent because of the splendor of the world. This results in stopping him from his objective. As a result, he is deceived by the trials and is destroyed. He writes, 'I looked for an example for man. The example is like that of a person who saves himself from an angry elephant and takes refuge in a well. Four snakes came from their holes. When he saw, he saw one of the largest sankes you could ever get in the pit of a well, long like a tall date palm. It had blood red eyes. It had a huge mouth that could swallow many animals. It had fangs like the tips of spears. The mouth was open, waiting for the person to fall so that it could

The peak of your objective should be Murāqabah, take kindness as your friend, tolerance your companion, peace a cave, spare time as an opportunity, the world something to be ridden of, the hereafter as a destination.[1]

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devour him. The person then looks up at two branches and he sees two huge rats at the base of these branches, one is white and the other is black. The rats are eating away at the branches tirelessly. He thinks about the situation and is worried about himself. He suddenly spots a beehive quite close to him, in which there is honey. He tastes it and the sweetness keeps him busy. The taste of the honey distracts him from thinking about his circumstances and that he should be looking for a way out. He forgot that his legs are the near the snakes, he does not know when they will catch him. He forgot that the two rats are gnawing away at the branches, and when they are cut, he will fall on the snake at the bottom. He was distracted and occupied with the honey until he fell and died.' (Kalīlah wa Damīnah p.89)

O people, do not be negligent of the hereafter. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى save you and I from negligence. Āmīn

[1] The original word is (منهلا)

Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ[1] said, "Allāh has not placed peace and comfort for a believer except in Jannah."[2]

Stay away from places of negligence, and the plots of the enemy.[3]

Beware of the attacks of the desires,[4] the severity of desire, and the false hopes of the carnal self.[5]

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[1] This is Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. One of the leading Tābi'īn. He passed away in 110 A.H. Regarding him, Sayyidah Ayesha رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا said, "Who is this person whose speech resembles that of the Ambiyā'?" (Al-Munyah wal Amal p.36)

[2] Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Death has disgraced the world. It has not kept any chance of joy for an intelligent person." (Tārīkh-ul-Islām, Dhahabī vol.4 p.102) Mālik Ibn Dīnār used to say, "The Day of Qiyāmah will be a day of celebration for the Muttaqīn."

[3] This refers to the deception of the enemy.

[4] The desires of the carnal self will put you into difficulty

It is Compulsory to gain Power over Harām Desires and the Enjoyment overpowering it

[5] Adopt the Dhikr of Allāh with some patience. Keep your sights on the result of following desires and overpower it by

thinking about the consequence of disobedience. As a result, you will get the pleasure of Allāh and your heart will become bright. Your soul will rise, your īmān will increase, the angels will surround you and you will get fragrances from the heaven that words cannot express. So seek the protection of Allāh, you will be saved.

What a beautiful condition it is when you overpower your desire. The angels will be pleased and will congratulate you. How evil is the condition when desire overpowers you, even in your own sight, the Shayātīn will be pleased and the anger of Allāh will surround you. I make Du'ā' that may Allāh keep you safe.

The Effects of Desire and its Evil

Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said in Al-Fawā'id p.139, 'You must know that it is easier to exercise patience in following your desire than it is to exercise patience over what desire and passion will cause to you. Desire and passion will cause pain and punishment, or it will cut off and enjoyment that is more perfect than it. Alternatively, it would cause you to waste time, bringing remorse and regret. It could bring dishonor to you, the honor whose perfection is much more beneficial to a person that it's being spoilt. It could cause your wealth to go away, and it is better for that wealth to remain rather than go away. It could lower your status and rank, and

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Your worst enemy is your soul which is between your sides."[1] It has become your worst enemy because you obey it.

If you are confused about anything, then turn to the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah and the ways of the pious. If the matter is

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keeping this up is much better. It could take away a bounty, and it is more enjoyable in having the bounty than fulfilling one's desire. It could cause you to be exposed to a wretched person, something that did not happen before. It could attract worry, concern, grief and fear. All of this can never be compared to the temporary joy of passion. It could cause knowledge to be forgotten, and remembering that knowledge is much better than fulfilling one's desire. It could cause and enemy to rejoice at your discomfort whilst it would cause grief to your friend. It could cut off the path of a bounty that was coming your way. It could cause a defect in you that will remain and bring a quality in you that will not go away. All of this is because qualities and mannerisms are the results of actions and deeds.'

[1] Bayhaqī, Kitāb-uz-Zuhd, with a Da'īf chain. For further detail, see Kashf-ul-Khifā vol.1 p.143

still concealed, then follow the opinion of the one whose Islām and intellect you are pleased with.[1]

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[1] Everything whose light is clear through the path of the truth, present it before the Book of Allāh. This means that everything in which you see goodness shining, do not enter it immediately, until you do not compare it with the Qur'ān, the Sunnah and the biographies of the pious.

The Link of the Sūfīs to the Qur'ān & Sunnah

Junayd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Our way is confined to principles, i.e. the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. The person who does not learn the Qur'ān, nor does he write the Hadīth, nor does he acquire deep understanding, he should not be followed." (Ighāthat-ul-Lahfān vol.1 p.125)

Shaykh Sha'rānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Every path that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not take is a path of darkness. Anyone who follows such a path cannot be sure of safety and not falling into destruction." (Kashf-ul-Ghummah vol.1 p.10)

He also said, "Adapt to the Sharī'ah, no matter how it is. Do not worry about your own discoveries because they can be wrong. You must study the books of Fiqh in abundance. This is against the norm of the Sūfīs. A ray of light appeared for them, so they stopped studying Fiqh. They said, "Studying

Fiqh is a barrier." This is ignorance on their part. (Shadharāt-udh-Dhahab vol.8 p.374)

Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Ihyā vol.1 p.37 says, 'Junayd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said that one day, his Shaykh, Sirrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "When you leave me, in whose company do you sit?" He said, "I sit with Muhāsibī." He said, "He is a wonderful person. Benefit from his knowledge and his character. Stay away from his theology which he refutes and his refutation of those who are engrossed in theology." When I turned to leave, I heard him say, "May Allāh turn you into a person who is attached to Ahādīth and a Sūfī. May He not make you a Sūfī who is attached to Hadīth." Al-Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "What he meant by this is that a person who studies Hadīth, and then he becomes a Sūfī, he will be successful. As for a person who becomes a Sūfī before acquiring knowledge, he will put himself into danger."

Some Sūfīs Disregard Outer Knowledge: This can take them out of the fold of Islām

Ibn Rajab Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "There are many people who claim to have internal knowledge. They speak about it and suffice on it. They look down on outer knowledge, which is the laws of Halāl and Harām in essence. They criticize those engaged in outer knowledge by saying, 'They are under a veil and are involved only with the shell.'

This actually entails criticism of the Sharī'ah and the good deeds that the Ambiyā' brought and encouraged us to do and they gave it due importance. At certain times, some of the Sūfīs went to the extent of saying that these actions are not required of them. They claimed that all these actions are for the public. As for those who have reached (Allāh), they have no need for it.

These people, as stated by Junayd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, have reached, but to Jahannam. This is from the great deception of Shaytān, until he takes them out of the fold of Islām.

Some of them think such things like this inner knowledge cannot be acquired from the lamp of Nubuwwah, nor from the Qur'ān or Sunnah. They say that it can only be acquired through thoughts, ilhām, and kashf. In this way, these people have very bad thoughts about the Sharī'ah. This is because they feel that this inner knowledge cannot be acquired from that beneficial knowledge that reforms the hearts and brings them closer to Allāh.

These corrupt thoughts makes them turn away fully from the Sharī'ah that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ brought. They only speak based on their views and thoughts. They are astray and take others astray.

When will Falsehood Overpower the Truth?

You must know that the truth is verified as the truth when the soul and proper nature accepts it.[1] Do you not see that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Ask your heart for a verdict, even if the Muftīn give you a verdict."[2]

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[1] A normal nature will accept the truth and it will reject falsehood because of its nature. The nature that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى created it with. Truth will overpower falsehood as long as the heart of a person is engaged with it, and he remains firm on it. It is mentioned in Manāqib Imām Ahmad p.311, 'During the days of trial for Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, the time when the Mu'tazilah had gained authority over the Ahl-us-Sunnah wal Jamā'ah, and they forced the people to have the opinion that the Qur'ān was created, he was asked, "O Abū 'Abdullāh, have you not seen how falsehood has triumphed over the truth?" He said, "Never, the victory of falsehood over the truth will only happen when the hearts shift away from guidance and go towards deviation. Our hearts are still holding onto the truth."

[2] Bukhārī in At-Tārīkh Al-Kabīr, Arba'īn Nawawī

Who should be told to ask his heart for a verdict?

Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said in Ihyā vol.5 p.6, 'How strong is this heart, that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not tell every single person to ask his heart. He صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ only said this to

Wābisah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, because he knew that condition that he was in.'

Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ also said, 'Asking the heart will be where a Muftī issues a verdict of permissibility of something. However, if he says that something is forbidden, then it will be compulsory to stay away from it. This is not applicable to every heart. This is because sometimes a heart is affected by whispering that negates everything. Sometimes a heart is lenient and accepts everything. These two types are therefore not considered. Consideration will be given to the heart of an 'ālim that is fully aware of even the minor details of things. Such a heart is the yardstick by means of which realities are checked. Such a heart is worthy of appreciation. (Irshād-ul-Fuhūl p.233)

'Allāmah Munāwī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, 'Some 'ulamā' said, 'If we take the address in this Hadīth to be general, then we would say that it applies to the person whose heart Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has expanded with the light of conviction. Then others issue a fatwā to him with intuition or their inclination, without any proof, otherwise, it will be binding on him to follow the Sharī'ah, even if he is not fully clear with it.' (Fayd-ul-Qadīr vol.1 p.495)

Hafiz Ibn Rajab رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, 'This Hadīth illustrates that Allāh made it the nature of His special servants to recognize the

truth, to be inclined towards it and to accept it. He established in the natures of people to love the truth and to turn away from its opposite. For this reason, He gave His commands the name, Ma'rūf, and He called His prohibitions Munkar. He has informed us that the hearts experience peace and tranquility with His Dhikr. The Hadīth of Wābisah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ teaches us that we should turn to the heart when in doubt. If the heart is inclined towards something, and one is satisfied, it will be good and lawful. If the case is contrary to this, it will be evil and unlawful. (Jāmi'-ul-'Ulūm wal Hikam p.221)

'Allāmah Ibn Hajar Haytamī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, 'The reply of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to Sayyidunā Wābisah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ shows the understanding, intelligence and luminous heart of the Sahābī. This is because Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ assigned him to his heart's understanding and he knew that he will be able to understand by himself because no one can comprehend this except he who has these qualities. If the person is hard by nature and he has a weak power of comprehension, he will not be given such guidance. The reason for this is that such a person will not be able to reach a proper conclusion. The commands and prohibitions of the Sharī'ah have to be explained to him in detail. This was one of the habits of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ with his Sahābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. He would address them according to their understanding. Based on

Acquire firm knowledge and make your limbs adhere to it.[1] Give consideration to the fact that Allāh is close to you. Stand in front of Him like a servant seeking refuge. You will find Him to be kind and merciful.[2]

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this, Sayyidah Ayesha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said, "Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ instructed us to treat people according to their rank." (Al-Fath-ul-Mubīn p.192)

The Person who Worships without Knowledge, He will cause more corruption than Reform

[1] This means, do not move any part of your body without having knowledge from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى about the permissibility and validity of what you are doing. Otherwise, you will be doing something that will bring harm to you, not benefit. 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "The person who worships without knowledge, in another narration, he who practices without knowledge, will cause more harm than good." (Ad-Dārimī vol.1 p.77, Jāmi' Bayān Al-'Ilm wa Fadlihī vol.1 p.27, Kitāb-uz-Zuhd p.301)

An Incident of a Person who pleaded before Allāh and His being saved from getting killed

[2] How quickly does Allāh accept the Du'ā' of a person who asks before Allāh and he has none but Allāh in his heart, how great is the help of Allāh for him. Hāfiz Ibn Kathīr رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ mentions a unique incident in his Tafsīr, vol.3 p.371, under

the verse, 'Who is it that responds the distressed when he calls Him, and removes his difficulty?' (Sūrah Naml, 62)

With reference from Ibn 'Asākir, he mentions the incident, 'there was a person who used to take people on his donkey for a fee. He used to take them from Damascus to Az-Zabadānī. One day, a person went with him. He said, "During a section of the journey, we moved on a road that was rarely taken." I said, "I do not know this road." He replied, "It is shorter." We took this path and came to a rugged terrain and a deep valley in which there were many dead people. The man said, "Hold the head of the donkey until I get off." He climbed down, and then took out a knife. He came towards me. I started running, but he came behind me. "I took the name of Allāh and said, "Take the donkey and whatever it has loaded on it." He said, "It is mine's already. I want to kill you." I pleaded with him, taking the name of Allāh, I told him of the punishment. He did not listen to anything. I said, "I ask you permission to offer two Rak'āts of Salāh." He replied, "I permit you, but make quick." I stood up to offer Salāh. However, when I started, I forgot everything that I had memorized of the Qur'ān. I could not remember a single word. I stood there at a loss whilst he said, "Hurry, complete your Salāh." Allāh granted me the ability to recite, 'Who is it that responds to the distressed when he calls Him, and removes hardship?' (Sūrah Naml, 62)

Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٰٱللَّٰهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ said, "Allāh treats a servant in accordance to his position in his own sight."[1] This is in accordance to his fear of Allāh, his knowledge of Him and his recognition of Him.

You must know well that he who gives preference to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ gives preference to him.[2] He who obeys Allāh, Allāh will love him. He who stays away from something for the sake of Allāh, Allāh will not punish him. Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٰٱللَّٰهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ said, "Stay away from that which

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Suddenly, I saw an equestrian coming from the entrance of the valley. He had a spear in his hand. He threw it towards the man. It struck him and he fell to the ground. I ran to him and asked, "I ask you in the name of Allāh, who are you?" He said, "I am the servant of the One Who responds to the distressed when he calls Him, and removes hardship.' I then took my donkey with all my goods and returned safely.'

Glory is for Allāh, He gives refuge when none can give refuge against His anger.

[1] Abū Ya'lā, Al-Bazzār, Tabrānī, Bayhaqī, Hākim

[2] He who places the obedience of Allāh before every step he takes, Allāh will make such a person special with His closeness and He will be pleased with him.

causes you to doubt for that which does not cause you to doubt." You will never feel that you are missing something if you leave it out for the sake of Allāh.[1]

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[1] Hilyah vol.6 p.352, Tārīkh Baghdad vol.2 p.387, Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.3 p.814

It is appropriate to mention here the statement of Hassān Ibn Abī Sinān Al-Basrī. He was a great worshipper amongst the Tābi'īn. He was a student of Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He said, "I have not seen anything easier than wara' (abstention from the unlawful). A Hadīth says, 'Abstain from that which causes you to doubt for that which does not cause you any doubt.' (Bukhārī)

Zuhayr Ibn Nu'aym Al-Bābī As-Salūlī Al-Basrī narrates, 'Yūnus Ibn 'Ubayd Al-Basrī, a student of Hasan Basrī, met Hassān Ibn Abī Sinān. Yūnus said to him, "I have not experienced anything more difficult than abstention from the unlawful." Hassān said, "I have not experienced anything easier than abstention from the unlawful." He asked, "How is that?" Hassān replied, "I abstain from that which causes me to doubt for that which does not cause me to doubt. In doing this, I am at peace with myself." (Fath-ul-Bārī vol.4 p.250)

Some scholars said that Hassān said this in accordance to his status. In reality, abstaining from what he referred to is

Safeguard your heart from having ill thoughts about people, by making a good excuse for them. Push back envy by curtailing your hopes. Expel pride through the power of Allāh.[1] Stay away from every action that would compel you to offer excuses.[2] Stay away from every situation that would throw you into deception. Safeguard your Islām by following your elders. Protect your trust through seeking knowledge. Look after your intellect by following the ways of those who have forbearance. Prepare yourself to exercise patience in every situation. Hold onto solitude through the Dhikr of

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more difficult on many people than bearing physical difficulties."

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'Glad tidings for the person who has lofty courage, high as that of Hassān Ibn Abī Sinān. In so doing, he was at peace with himself in this world and in the hereafter."

[1] Think of the power of Allāh over you and leave pride

[2] Sayyidunā 'Alī رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "Beware of what the minds hastily reject, even if you have an excuse. This is because it is not possible for you to offer an excuse to every person who hears evil about you." (Marāqī-al-Falāh p.662)

Allāh.[1] Make sure that you show gratitude for bounties.[2] Seek the help of Allāh in every matter.

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[1] Engage in the Dhikr of Allāh when you are alone, in solitude, because this is the furthest away from ostentation and there is more hope of it being accepted by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. One of the people who will be shaded by the throne of Allāh on the Day of Qiyāmah will be a person who remembers Allāh in solitude.

The Pious Predecessors were Regular in Praise of Allāh and Gratitude to Him

[2] The meaning of gratitude means to praise someone who bestowed some favour, bounty, or act of kindness to you. Other scholars say that gratitude includes confining what you have and searching for what you do not have. This is based on the verse, 'If you are grateful, I shall give you more." (Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 7)

Expressing gratitude to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى and praising Him were qualities that were found amongst the Sahābah, Tābi'īn and the pious predecessors. They did this every time they met, every time they got together, whether in private or in public. Their hearts were enlightened by seeing the bounties of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى coming down on them continuously. Their tongues were moving with the praise of Allāh. In fact, some of them would go out in order to meet

his brother and ask him about his well-being even though he had just met him. The only reason for this was to hear his praise and thanks to Allāh.

Such objectives are found in the practice and way of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Tabrānī narrates from Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr رضي الله عنه, “Rasūlullāh ﷺ said to a person, “How was your morning, O so and so?” He said, “I praise Allāh, together with you, O Rasūlullāh.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “This is what I wanted to hear from you.” (Majma’-uz-Zawā’id vol.10 p.140)

In Kitāb-uz-Zuhd, ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak رحمه الله narrates from ‘Alqamah Ibn Marthad from Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, “At times, we used to meet each other several times in a day. We would ask each other about his condition. The only reason why we did this was because we wanted to hear Allāh being praised.”

Sayyidunā Anas Ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه said, “I heard someone greeting Sayyidunā ‘Umar رضي الله عنه.” He replied and asked, “How are you?” He replied, “I praise Allāh together with you.” Sayyidunā ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said, “This is what I wanted to hear from you.”

Habīb Ibn Abī Thābit narrates from Sa’īd Ibn Jubayr, ‘The first to be called towards Jannah will be those who praise

Seek the help of Allāh in every matter. Ask Allāh for goodness in every situation. When Allāh has decided anything for you, then stay away from raising objections about it. Hold yourself to every action with which you would love to meet Allāh. Remove every deed that you dislike in others from your own self. Throw aside the companionship of every friend whose company does not increase you in goodness with each day. Take a significant share of pardon for yourself and overlooking others.[1]

Allāh in every situation, or, in privacy and in public." All praise is for Allāh, in every situation, forever.

Ishāq Ibn 'Abdullāh narrates that Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "How was your morning O so and so?" He replied, "I praise Allāh together with you." Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "This is why I asked you." (Hilyah vol.7 p.230)

Sa'īd Al-Maqburī narrates that Sayyidunā Ibn 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "I go to the market place. Despite having no need, I go so that I can greet the people and they can greet me." (Tabaqāt Al-Kubrā vol.4 p.155)

[1] The author is indicating that if you fall into an argument with someone, then overlooking and forgiving is much better for you than to continue with the argument. The author is correct in this instruction because arguing destroys Islām, it occupies the mind, removes the tranquility

of the heart, it takes the sleep of a person away, turns his heart into a burning fire. Overlooking and forgiving, even though it may cause one to suffer, is much more better. It wipes away all these ailments and brings peace, tranquility, virtue and goodness.

The Story of Salm Ibn Qutaybah in Staying away from Arguing

Salm Ibn Qutaybah was from the Tab' ut Tābi'īn. He had an argument with his cousin. Salm continued with the argument until it was presented in court. He then retracted from his stance in order to protect his honour. He gained an advantage by doing this. Salm said, 'Bashīr Ibn 'Ubaydullāh Ibn Abī Bakrah met with me in court whilst he was waiting for the case to be decided between himself and the disputing party.' He asked me, "Why are you sitting here?" I said, "Because of an argument between me and my cousin. He has made certain claims over my house." Bashīr said to me, "Your father was kind to me and I would like to return the favour. I have not seen anything more destructive to one's Islām, more humiliating, more distasteful and more stressful on the heart than arguing." Salm said, "I stood up to leave." The disputing party said, "What is the matter with you?" I said, "I do not want to argue with you." He said, "Have you now realized that I am on the truth?" I said, "No. i am

protecting my honour from this." I then refrained from arguing." (Ihyā vol.8 p.9, Kitāb-us-Samt p.98)

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'When a person is harmed by others and he adopts patience and overlooks, he does not think about revenge and doing the same to the one who harmed him. His result will be much better than the one who takes revenge and repays evil with evil. If he overlooks and is forbearing, if he backs down and acts with honour, he will experience peace and coolness of heart within his bosom and his emotions. Similarly, he will get peace of mind. In reality, staying away from arguing and disputes and replying to the wrongdoers and jealous people is more effective than replying to them.

The Excellent Result for the Person who Stays Away from Arguing and Exacting Revenge

In Madārij-us-Sālikīn vol.2 p.320, Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "The scene of peace and coolness of the heart is something very honourable for the one who recognizes it and tastes the sweetness of it. This entails his heart and inner feeling not bothering about any harm that he has experienced. Moreover, his heart must not bother about avenging any harm and giving satisfaction to his soul. His heart should rather be empty of this. He must realize that the peace and tranquility of heart and it being devoid of all this is much

more beneficial, it brings more delight to the heart and is much more advantageous for him. The reason for this is that if the heart occupies itself in revenge, it will miss out everything that is much more important and better for it. By doing this, the person will be deceived. A person of intelligence will consider all of this to be engagements of the foolish. How can one compare between the peace of heart and it being filled with deception and evil thoughts, and being fully engrossed with exacting revenge?'

As for the condition of peace and tranquility, if a person stays away from replying to harm and from exacting revenge, he will save himself from all that is much worse than this. If he exacts revenge, he will be in fear. Revenge breeds enmity and an intelligent person never feels safe from his enemy even if he is someone insignificant. There are many insignificant people who have brought about the fall of a major enemy. Therefore, if a person forgives, if he does not take revenge, if he does not respond to the harm caused to him, he will save himself from enmity or the increase of it. His forgiving and overlooking will break the power of his enemy and push back his fear. This is the opposite of that revenge will cause. Experience bears testimony to all of this.'

You must know well that the truthfulness of a believer will be tested in every condition. Trials and tests are required of himself.[1] A believer will be mindful of himself for Allāh.

Listen to this poetry, it is full of lesson. Act on it by staying away from arguing. Hand over all such matters to Allāh. He has knowledge of all things, hidden and open. He will take the creation to account. Hāfiz Abū Shāmah Maqdisī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote these lines. He was a faqīh, a historian, a qārī and a linguist. Great injustice and harm was caused to him. He had to suffer physical harm when he was about seventy years old. Someone told him, "Go to the authorities so that they can fight for your rights and take revenge on your behalf." He said the following lines in reply, 'I said to him, 'Are you not going to lay a complaint? What has been done to you is very severe.' I said, 'Allāh will take revenge for us. He is the One Who takes revenge and satiates the thirsty. If we put our trust in Allāh, He will suffice for us. Allāh is sufficient for us and he is the best dispenser of affairs.' (Dhayl-ur-Raudatayn p.240)

[1] The diacritical marks are as in the original copy. One copy says that a peson will be required to adopt patience over tests. And Allāh knows best.

Therefore, remain steadfast on the truth, you will be given the love of the creation.[1]

Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ remains Steadfast in the face of the Difficulty he was put through

[1] Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ remained steadfast on the truth and he acquired the love of the creation. This is because when he was tested over the matter of 'Khalq-ul-Qur'ān', his feet were shackled. He did not bother about the imprisonment or about being put to the sword. Instead of this, he had the fear that his body will not be strong enough to bear the torture of whipping which could cause his patience to weaken. He would get lots of support and encouragement to remain steadfast on the truth. This encouragement would come from such people he never hoped it would come from.

These words of encouragement would come from thieves, criminals and Bedouins. He would get great strength to adopt patience through this. He was fifty-seven years old at the time. He had now entered the stage of old age and the weakness of body had overcome him. He would be whipped severely until he would fall unconscious. Despite this, he but he remained patient. After everything was done, the truth and Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ prevailed and whatever his enemies did to him went all in vain. The Ahl-us-Sunnah

wal Jamā'ah had rejoiced at his patience and bravery. Their hearts were filled with love and attachment to him forever.

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was captured in Baghdad and he was taken to Raqqah. Al-Ma'mūn was stationed there. Some of the 'Ulamā' came to him and mentioned to him some of the narrations that permit dissimulation. Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ refused to do this and said, "What do you say about the Hadīth of Sayyidunā Khabbāb رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, in which Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "From those that passed before you, there would be a person whose body would be sawed but that would not cause him to move away from his religion?" When hearing this, the 'Ulamā' gave up the hope that he would act on dissimulation. (Manāqib Imām Ahmad p.316, Tabaqāt Al-Hanābilah vol.1 p.43, Al-Bidāyah wan Nihāyah vol.10 p.234

When Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was in prison, he was threatened with whipping and death. He said, "If an ignorant person remains silent because of ignorance, and an 'ālim replies on the basis of dissimulation, then when will proper evidence be upheld for the sake of Allāh? Abū Sa'īd Al-Haddād said, "I went to Imām Ahmad when he was imprisoned. It was during the time before he was whipped. During a conversation, I said, "O Abū 'Abdullāh, you have the responsibility of family, you have children, and you have an

excuse." I was trying to make things easy. He said, "O Abū Sa'īd, if this is the level of your intelligence, then you will remain in rest and ease."

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said to the people, "I am not concerned about incarceration. This prison and my house are the same for me. I am not concerned about being killed. What I fear is that I be tested by the lash and will not be able to be patient." One of the prisoners heard this and said, "Do not fear anything. O Abū 'Abdullāh, you will only feel the first two lashes. Then, you will not even know where the others will fall." When he heard this, his spirits were raised.

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Remains Steadfast because of the Encouragement he got from Abul Haytham

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Ever since I was faced with this problem, I did not hear any words stronger than the words I heard from a Bedouin who I met at a place called Rahābah Tauq." He said, "O Ahmad, if the truth kills you, you will die as a martyr. If you survive, you will live as a praised person." When I heard this, my heart became strong."

'Abdullāh Ibn Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I used to hear my father say often, "May Allāh have mercy on Abul

Haytham. May Allāh forgive Abul Haytham, May Allāh overlook the shortcomings of Abul Haytham." I asked him, "O my father, who is Abul Haytham?" He said, "Do you not know him?" I said, "No." He then said, "Abul Haytham is the person who used to lash me. The day I was brought and my hands were stretched out on two pieces of wood, in order to be lashed; someone pulled my garment from behind and said, "Do you know me?" I said, "No." He said, "I am Abul Haytham, the one who commits many sins. I was a pick-pocket. It is recorded in the register of the Khalīfah that I was given eighteen thousand lashes over the years. I remained patient in order to get a share of the world, in obedience to Shaytān. Therefore, you must remain patient in the obedience of Allāh, for the sake of Islām."

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "The instruction was given. I was made to stand in front of the two pieces of wood. A person standing behind me said, "Hold onto the wood from the top." I did not understand, so my hands slipped. The lashers were brought. They had their whips. One them lashed me twice, whilst the Khalīfah, Al-Mu'tasim, was saying, "Lash harder, may Allāh cut your hands off!" the next lasher would come and lash me twice. Then the next would come. They continued lashing me. I fainted a few times. When the lashing stopped, I would gain consciousness."

Al-Mu'tasim stood up and told me to accept their view of Khalq-ul-Qur'ān, i.e. the view of the Mu'tazilah. However, I did not reply. Those that were near to me said, "May you be destroyed. The Khalīfah is standing at your head." I did not agree with their view. They started lashing me again. However, I did not respond. They started lashing me again. Al-Mu'tasim came to me for the third time. He asked me again but I could not understand what he was saying because of the severe lashing. They started lashing me again. I fell unconscious and did not feel any beating. Al-Mu'tasim became scared. I was then released and did not know anything except when I was brought into a room. They removed the chains from my feet. This took place on 25 Ramadhān 221 A.H."

"One of the people present said, "We threw you on your face and threw a mat on your back. We trampled you." I said, "I did not feel anything." They brought some soup to me so that I could break my fast, as I was weak. I refused and completed my fast. When the time of Zuhr came, Qādī Ibn Simā'ah went forward and led the Salāh. He turned around after the Salāh and said, "You performed Salāh whilst there was blood on your clothes." I said, "Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ performed Salāh whilst blood was flowing from his wound." He then remained silent.

"When Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ returned home, a doctor came and cut off a piece of dead flesh from his body. The doctor tended to him until he recovered. However, he continued to experience difficulty in his hands. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ blessed him with complete recovery and then Al-Mu'tasim and the Muslims were happy. Al-Mu'tasim was happy because he later had regrets about what he had done to Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ forgave all those who caused harm to him, except for those who continued with their innovations. He used to recite the following verse when forgiving, 'They should forgive and overlook. Do you not like that Allāh forgives you? Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.'

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to say, "How will it benefit you if your fellow Muslim is punished because of you?"

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I was given eighteen lashes in comparison to the eighteen thousand that Abul Haytham was given. The servant of Al-Mu'tasim came out and said, "Amīr-ul-Mu'minīn has pardoned him."

Abul Hasan Ibn Al-Munādī said, "My grandfather said, "Abū 'Abdullāh, i.e. Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was lashed in the house of Al-Mu'tasim, whilst he was hanging. He was made to hang in such a way that there was just a fist

Be true in your search and quest, you will be given knowledge of foresight. The streams of recognition will be

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distance between him and the ground. The only reason why they stopped the lashing was that he fainted. He turned yellow and became limp. When seeing this, Al-Mu'tasim became scared and said, "Loosen the fetters and take him to his house."

One of the lashers said, "Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ proved the villians useless. By Allāh, I lashed him so hard that had a camel been in front of me and if I had to lash it, I would have made a hole in its belly." One of the lashers who took turns to lash him said, "If I had to lash an elephant, I would have crushed it."

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "Subhānallāh, look how quickly Allāh helps His servants.

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ forgave all of them because his sights were on what his teacher, Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'He who dishonours me, or he has some right on me, so I forgave for the sake of Allāh, in seeking for His favour. This is so that I do not become a person who will stop the favour on a Muslim on the Day of Recompense and I do not become a person who treats the Ummah of Muhammad صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in a bad way.

made to flow for you. Those sciences that come to you only through the divine ability given by Allāh, make it special for yourself. This is because it is only for those who will go ahead in actions. The fear of Allāh is specific for those of knowledge. It is specific for those who rely on Allāh, fear Him, have conviction, and are grateful.

You must know that whatever understanding reaches a person, it will be in accordance to the uprightness of his mind and intellect,[1] how much of his knowledge is present, his fear of Allāh and obedience to Him.

When Allāh gives intelligence to a person, and gives him life with knowledge after having acquired īmān, when Allāh gives him insight through conviction, and enables him to recognize his faults – then the qualities of virtue have been laid out before him. Therefore, you must seek virtue by fearing Allāh, and acquire knowledge from those who fear Allāh.[2] You must gain conviction through seeking certainty

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[1] The correct nature of his intellect in grasping. Another copy says, 'in accordance to how much his intellect has an effect over his desires.'

[2] The author رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ is indicating towards a great effect of taqwā, that is, virtue. This word encapsulates different forms of goodness. 'Allāmah Firozābādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ enumerated

the effects and glad tidings of taqwā that are mentioned in the Noble Qur'ān, he has listed twenty-seven effects of taqwā. He said, "The glad-tidings that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ gave to the virtuous are:

1. The glad-tiding of favours
2. The glad-tiding of the help of Allāh
3. The glad-tiding of knowledge and wisdom
4. The glad-tiding of forgiveness of sins and honour for the Muttaqī by giving him a great reward
5. This glad-tiding is not mentioned in the original manuscript
6. The glad-tiding of forgiveness
7. The glad-tiding of ease in one's matters
8. The glad-tiding of being released from worry and tribulation
9. The glad-tiding of increase in sustenance with peace and abundance
10. The glad-tiding of safety from punishment and torment
11. The glad-tiding of achieving one's objectives

12. The glad-tiding of getting divine inspiration and protection
13. The glad-tiding of testimony in their favour of being amongst the truthful
14. The glad-tiding of honour and being the most honourable
15. The glad-tiding of the love of Allāh
16. The glad-tiding of success
17. The glad-tiding of gaining closeness to Allāh
18. The glad-tiding of acquiring recompense for remaining patient during adversity
19. The glad-tiding of the acceptance of charity
20. The glad-tiding of purity and being the choice servants of Allāh
21. The glad-tiding of being a perfect servant
22. The glad-tiding of gardens and springs of Jannah
23. The glad-tiding of safety from calamity
24. The glad-tiding of enjoying the honour of being over and above the rest of the creation

on occasions of truthfulness, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'In this way, We showed Ibrāhīm the rule of the skies and the earth, so that he would be convinced.' (Sūrah An'ām, 75)

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Learn the knowledge of conviction, because I also learn it."[1] You must know well

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25. The glad tiding of the removal of fear and grief for punishment
26. The glad-tiding of a spouse that is compatible with one
27. The glad-tiding of enjoying closeness to Allāh, meeting Him and seeing Him

Look at the great amount of benefits of taqwā. Look at how much the virtuous ones receive. Therefore, you must have the intense desire to be among those of taqwā.

[1] Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says that the meaning of this statement is that one should sit in the company of those who have conviction, one should hear the knowledge of conviction from them. One should adhere to following them so that one's conviction can become strong, as his conviction is strong.

that any intellect that does not have three things is an intellect that is overpowered by desire.[1]

They are:

1. To give preference to obedience over disobedience
2. To give preference to knowledge over ignorance
3. To give preference to Islām over this world

Any form of knowledge that does not have these three things is much worse.

They are:

1. Abstaining from harm by cutting off desire
2. Presence of deeds with fear
3. Meting out justice with generosity and mercy

You must know well that no one has been beautified with anything better than intellect.[2] No one has worn a more

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[1] An intellect that is overpowered by desires is an intellect that deceives a person. It causes a person to look at evil as good and vice-versa.

[2] 'Urwah Ibn Zubayr رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, the great Tābi'ī, said, "The best thing that the servants of Allāh are given in this world is the intellect. The best thing that they are given in the hereafter is the pleasure of Allāh." (Al-'Aql wa Fadluhu p.13)

beautiful garment than knowledge.[1] This is because Allāh can be truly recognized only through the intellect. He can only be properly obeyed through knowledge.[1]

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[1] Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "If knowledge had to be given a form, it would have been more beautiful than the sun, the moon, the stars and the skies."

Sayyidunā Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "Knowledge is the life of the hearts from ignorance. It is the light of the eyes from the darkness. It is the strength of the body from weakness. It takes a person to the lofty position of the choicest and most virtuous servants of Allāh, and the highest stages in this world and the hereafter. Pondering over knowledge is equivalent to fasting. Discussing it is equivalent to standing in worship in front of Allāh. Through knowledge, family ties are maintained and one learns the lawful from the unlawful. It is the leader, action is the follower. The fortunate ones are inspired by it and the unfortunate ones are deprived of it." (Sharh Hadīth Al-'Ilm p.33)

'Allāmah Firozābādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "From the knowledge of character, it is clear that the basic human virtues are four: knowledge, bravery, chastity and justice. All other virtues are either branches of these four or are attached to them."

Knowledge is the virtue of the soul that speaks. Bravery is the virtue of the soul that has anger. Chastity is the virtue of the soul that has lust. Justice is a general virtue which covers all of them.

There is no doubt that the soul that speaks is the noblest of all. Its virtue is the noblest of these virtues. This is because the others cannot be perfect and complete without knowledge. On the other hand, knowledge is complete and perfect without them. Therefore, it stands as independent of them, whilst they depend on it. Knowledge is therefore the best." (Basā'ir dhawī At-Tamyīz fī Latā'if Al-Kitāb Al-'Azīz vol.1 p.42)

Tūsī said in Ādāb-ul-Muta'llimīn, 'The nobility of knowledge not hidden from anyone. This is because knowledge is a specialty of humanity. All other qualities like bravery, strength, kindness and so one are shared by humans and other animals. It is on the basis of knowledge that Allāh showed the superiority of Ādam عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ over the angels and instructed them to prostrate before Ādam عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ. In addition, knowledge is the means of reaching eternal happiness, on condition that there are deeds in accordance to the demands of knowledge.'

Poetry on the Superiority of either Knowledge or Intellect

[1] The author, Abū ʻAbdullāh Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, says that the intellect is superior to knowledge. This is the truth. Some scholars give superiority to knowledge over the intellect. They showed a conversation between them, where one expresses superiority over the other. It is as follows, 'The knowledge of the learned and the intellect of the intelligent had a dispute regarding which one of them has the greatest share of honour. Knowledge said, 'I have the greatest share of honour'. Intellect said, 'As for I, it is through me that Allāh has been recognized.' Knowledge then said, 'By which of the two of us has Allāh described Himself in the Qurān?' It was then clear to intellect that knowledge is his master. Intellect therefore kissed the head of knowledge and turned away.'

The author who wrote these lines left out an important point. The intellect is the source and origin of knowledge. Knowledge flows from the intellect just as light flows from the sun, and seeing is the action of the eye. Indeed in this there are signs for those who have intellect.

In Ar-Ri'āyah, Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'The intellect is similar to the eyesight of a person. Knowledge is like a lamp. The person who does not have eyesight will not be able to

benefit from the lamp. The person who has sight, but he has no lamp, he will not be able to see whatever he needs to see.'

It seems as though Ibn Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ quoted from these words when he said, 'The greatest bounty on man is intellect. This is because through it a person will recognize Allāh. It is the means through which one can affirm the Ambiyā'. However, when the intellect did not fulfil all his objectives, the Ambiyā' were sent and the books were revealed. The example of the Sharī'ah is like that of the sun. The example of the intellect is like that of the eye. When the eye is opened and it is normal, it will see the sun. When the intellect has established the veracity of the true statements of the Ambiyā' through miracles, it submitted to the Ambiyā' and relied on them for everything that is concealed from it.' (Talbīs Iblīs)

Shaykh Shihāb-ud-Dīn Ibn Jahbal Ad-Dimashqī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The Sharī'ah considers the intellect to be just. It accepts its testimony and uses it as evidence in many places in the Noble Qur'ān. For example, the evidence is given that if Allāh created man in the very beginning, He can re-create him and give him life again. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'He mentions an example for us and forgets about his own creation. He says, 'Who will give life to the bones when they have become like crumbled dust?' Say, 'He will give life to

You must know well that those who recognized Allāh were the ones who built the foundations of every situation on the testimony of knowledge in Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. They acquired a thorough understanding of subsidiary matters. See what Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ says, 'He who practises on knowledge, Allāh will grant him knowledge that he does not possess.' (Hilyah vol.10 p.15. This is not a Hadīth, but a statement of Sayyidunā 'Isā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ)

The sign of this is understanding additional knowledge through fear and gaining more knowledge through following. As the knowledge of a person increases, the more

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them, Who created them the first time.' (Sūrah Yā Sīn, 78-79)

Similarly, Allāh uses the intellect to prove His oneness. He says, 'If there were in the heavens and the earth a deity besides Allāh, there would have been corruption.' (Sūrah Ambiyā, 22)

Regret for the person who rejects the testimony of the one whose testimony Allāh has accepted and refutes evidence that Allāh has presented. (Tabaqāt Ash-Shāfi'iyyah Al-Kubrā vol.9 p.84)

his fear of Allāh will increase,[1] the more his knowledge increases, the more he will increase in humility.

The principle upon which they remained steadfast in their way is holding onto commanding the good and forbidding evil with truthfulness,[2] to give preference to knowledge

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[1] Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was very true, he said, 'In accordance to the amount of knowledge a person has, his fear will be greater. There is no true scholar that does not fear Allāh. The person who feels safe from the plan of Allāh, is actually ignorant of Allāh. The person who fears the plan of Allāh has recognized Allāh.'

[2] The meaning of truthfulness here is that when you command the good, you must do it yourself and if you prohibit something, you must stay away from it yourself. If you do not do this, Allāh reprimands you in the verse, 'What, you command the people with piety and forget yourself, while you read the book? Do you not understand?' (Sūrah Baqarah, 44)

Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "If you command good, then be a person who does it the most, and if you forbid evil then be a person who stays away from it the most, otherwise you will be destroyed." (Az-Zuhd, p.360)

over the desires of the soul, and to be satisfied with Allāh, turning away from the entire creation.[1]

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[1] The following story is presented about Imām Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ with regards to giving preference to knowledge. Hāfiz Abū Shāmah Al-Maqdisī says in Dhayl-ur-Raudatayn p.22, that Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a great orator; he had sweet characteristics, a soft voice and was balanced in his movements. He had a great ability over language during his advices.

Thousands of people used to sit in his gathering. The estimated numbers of attendees were a hundred thousand. He enjoyed a unique rank and position in terms of lecturing. The rulers and ministers used to attend his lectures. The Khalīfah would also attend, albeit behind a veil. The people used to prepare a day or two before to attend his lectures, and they used to rent out the places to sit for it. Someone said to him, "I did not sleep last night because of the intense desire to attend your gathering." He said, "This is because you wanted a good seating place. You should have not slept at night because of what you heard in the lecture."

May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ have mercy upon Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. How alert was his mind and heart. This is because he moved the negligent person from the desire of the soul and brought him to fulfilling the right of knowledge.

Seek the footsteps of those whose knowledge increased them in fear of Allāh, and their practice increased them in foresight,[1] and their intellect increased them in the recognition of Allāh. If your lack of etiquette has kept you away from their ways, then go back and rebuke yourself. The quality of the sincere will not remain hidden from the people of knowledge. You must know well that in every reflection and thought there is etiquette. In every indication,

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The Foresight of Imām Bukhārī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

[1] Look at the beautiful foresight, knowledge and practice of Imām Bukhārī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. His knowledge is well known from his book, Sahīh Al-Bukhārī. The people of knowledge are aware of this. As far as his practice is concerned, Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes, 'Muhammad Ibn Mansūr said, "We were in the gathering of Muhammad Ibn Ismā'īl Al-Bukhārī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. A person picked out some dirt from his beard and threw it on the floor of the Masjid. Imām Bukhārī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ saw the piece of dirt and then at the people. When the attention of the people turned away, I saw him taking out his hand. He picked up the dirt and placed it in his sleeve. When he left the Masjid, he took it out of his sleeve and threw it outside.'

In this way, Imām Bukhārī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ cleaned the Masjid form that which a person cleans his beard from. This is foresight in knowledge.

there is knowledge. No one can distinguish this except the person who has understood his objective from the understanding given by Allāh. In addition, he has acquired the benefits of conviction from his speech.

The sign of this in the truthful person is that when he looks, he takes lesson. When he is silent, he ponders and reflects. When he speaks, he remembers Allāh. When he is refused, he is patient. When he is given, he is grateful. When he is put through a calamity, he says, 'To Allāh do we belong and to Him is our return'. When someone acts ignorantly with him, he is forbearant. When he knows or learns something, he becomes humble. When he teaches, he is kind. When he is asked, he gives. He is a cure for those who seek him, a help for the people who seek to become righteous, he is a confidant for the truthful. He is a refuge of security for those in fear, he is virtuous, easily pleased for his own self, he sets high goals for the rights of Allāh.

His intention is more virtuous than his action. His action is more far-reaching than his words. His residence is the truth.

His refuge is shamefulness and his knowledge is abstention.[1]

A Unique Example of the Abstention of Ibn Mubārak رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

[1] His knowledge is established on practicing with abstention, he does not take concessions. This is because it is the result of true and proper knowledge. This is especially with regards to the person who is a leader and a role model for others. 'Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was the jurist of Khurāsān. He was a leader amongst the Muslims. He was born in 118 A.H and he passed away in 181 A.H. An example of his taqwā is mentioned here. This is something rare.

Abū Hassān Al-Basrī said, "I heard Hasan Ibn 'Arafah saying, 'Ibn Al-Mubārak said to me, "I lent a pen in Syria and I forgot to return it to its owner. When I came to Marw, I realized that the pen was still by me. So I returned to Syria and returned it to its owner.'" (Tārīkh Baghdad vol.10 p.167)

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "You would possibly feel that this is strange and something impossible. Yes, it is something strange in our times. Looking at our standard of living, it seems strange and far-fetched. However, the condition of the lives of people one thousand two hundred years ago was much different. Just as there is a great time difference between us and them, there is a great difference

His testimony is taqwā, he has insight from illumination with which he sees, and realites of knowledge that he

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between us and them in terms of virtue, lofty character traits, taqwā and practice.

The Enthusiasm & Desire of Imām Abū Dāwūd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ for the Sunnah

Imām Abū Dāwūd Sijistānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, compiler of the Sunan, does such an action in order to respond to a person who sneezed. This is very stange in our times.

'Allāmah Shanawānī said, "It is mentioned about Imām Abū Dāwūd that he was on board a ship. He heard a person at the shore sneezing and he said 'alhamdulillāh'. Imām Abū Dāwūd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ hired a boat for a Dirham and went to the person and responded by saying 'yarhamukallāh'. Imām Abū Dāwūd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُwas asked about this. He said, "Possibly this person is someone whose du'ā' is accepted." When the people on board the ship fell asleep, they heard someone saying, 'O people of the ship, Abū Dāwūd has purchased Jannah from Allāh for a Dirham.' (Sharh Mukhtasar Ibn Abī Jamrah p.290)

speaks from, and proofs of conviction with which he expresses himself.[1]

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[1] How beautiful are these qualities. They are very lofty and great when they are found collectively and are established in a person. These valuable habits were found in many of the pious predecessors. It is difficult to count them.

The Patience of Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Prison

May Allāh have mercy on Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. With his lofty life, he enlivened the biographies of the pious predecessors. He was put through a test, he was imprisoned in the fort of Damascus, and he was cut off from the people. His student, Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, was imprisoned with him, but kept away from him. Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ passed away in prison in a condition that he was at peace; he was in happiness and in pleasure. In the words of Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, he had the insight of illumination with which he saw. He had the essence of knowledge from which he spoke. He had the evidence of conviction with which he spoke. The prison was a place of solitude for him and he used to thank Allāh for it.

Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says about Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and himself, 'On one occasion, he asked, "What can my enemies do? My Jannah and my garden are in my chest. Wherever I go, they are with me. They never separate from me. My

imprisonment is solitude for me. Killing me is martyrdom for me. Taking me away from my hometown is a tour for me."

When he was imprisoned in the fort, he used to say, "If I had to spend the equivalent of this fort in gold, it would not be equal to my gratitude for this bounty." He said, "I did not recompense them for all the good that they have brought me."

When he used to go into Sajdah during incarceration, he would say, "O Allāh, help me engage in your Dhikr, in being grateful to You and in worshipping You in the best way, as Allāh wishes." He used to say this frequently.

On one occasion, he said, "A person truly imprisoned is he whose heart is imprisoned from his Rabb. A peson that has been captured is he whose desires have captured him." When entered the prison and reached the inner part, he looked at the walls and said, 'Then a wall will be set up between them, it will have a door. Inside will be mercy and the outside will be punishment.' (Sūrah Hadīd, 23)

Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "Allāh knows that I have never seen a person leading a purer life than him. Despite the dire conditions he faced, conditions that were opposite to comfort and luxury. Despite the incarceration, the threats he

The only person who can achieve this is the one who strives all the time for the sake of Allāh, his obedience is resolute, his intention is good, he shortens his hopes, he strives in

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got, and the false rumours that were spread about him. Despite all of this, he led the purest of lives, he was open hearted, he was strong willed, he was the happiest and the lush nature of the bounties was shining on his face."

"Whenever we became fearful, whenever we had bad thoughts, whenever the land became restricted, we would go to him. When we would look at him and hear him speak, all this would dissipate. These conditions would change to open heartedness; we would become strong, get conviction and peace." He would say, "There is Jannah on earth." He referred to the Jannah of believing in Allāh, the message that Rasūlullāh ﷺ came with. The person who does not enter this fort, the one who is engaged with the world, he will not enter the Jannah in the hereafter."

Glory be to Allāh, He showed His Jannah to His bondsman even before they went on to meet Him. He opened for them its gates in this world. By doing this, He gave them its refreshment, its fragrance, and its purity. This cleared the way for their powers to seek it and compete for it. (Al-Wābil As-Sayyib p.66)

remaining on his guard, he sets sail with the winds of refuge in the sea of du'ā' to Allāh. If he does this, his time will be a bounty, his circumstances will be safe and secure, he will not be deceived by the attractions of the world, and the shining mirage of its pleasant wind will not distract him from the terrors of the Day of Qiyāmah. By doing this, he will achieve the position of being awake after being asleep in negligence.

You must know that when the knowledge of an intelligent person is correct and his conviction is established, then he knows that nothing can save him from his Rabb except truthfulness. He hastens in seeking it; he searches for the mannerisms of those who possess it, out of the desire to live before death. He sells his self and his wealth to his Rabb, he heard Allāh saying, 'Allāh has purchased from the believers, their lives and wealth in exchange of Jannah.' (Sūrah Taubah, 111)[1]

Abul Wafā' Ibn Aqīl calls to Sacrifice his Life in the Path of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ

[1] Hafiz Ibn Rajab رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Dhayl Tabaqāt Al-Hanābilah vol.1 p.155 writes under the biography of Abul Wafā' Ibn Aqīl, 'He was amongst the senior 'Ulamā' and amongst the most intelligent of people. He said, "You must not take it to be too great to give your life for the sake of Allāh. This is because it

is the same life and soul that you spent yesterday in your love for a singing woman and your desire for a young boy. You thought about that very same woman during your travels so that you could get a greater share of the world. However, when it comes to the obedience of Allāh, you find it too great to spend and you feel that it is too expensive. By Allāh, spending the soul is not appealing but for the One Who, when He destroys, He replaces. When He replaces, He brings benefit. When He brings benefit, His benefit remains forever. By Allāh, that is what is appealing about spending the soul. Allāh says, 'And those who are killed in the path of Allāh, do not think that they are dead, but they are alive by their Rabb where they get provision. They are pleased with what Allāh has given them from His grace, and they take glad tidings that those who are coming behind them and have not yet reached, there is no fear for them, nor will they grieve. They are happy with the bounty and grace from Allāh, and indeed Allāh does not let the reward of the believers go to waste. (Sūrah Al-'Imrān, 167-171)

The Tābi'ī, Qatādah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, said, "Allāh made a price with them. By Allāh, He made a very expensive price." Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "He gave them souls which He created, and wealth which He gave to them. He then purchased all of this from them. Glory be to Him." An-Nasafī said, "A Bedouin passed Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, when he صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was reciting the verse quoted above. The Bedouin said, "By Allāh, this is a very profitable transaction. We will not cancel this

A person gains knowledge after ignorance, he becomes self-sufficient after being in need of others. He then becomes amiable after being in isolation. He comes near after being far. He gets rest after being tired. His entire life becomes a good one, the fear of Allāh becomes his recognizable feature, and contemplation becomes his condition. Have you not seen the Hadīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, "Worship Allāh as though you can see Him, if you cannot, then know that he sees you." (Muslim) The ignorant person will feel such a person to be too silent, someone unable to speak.[1]

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transaction, nor will we ask for it to be cancelled." He then went into battle and was martyred.

The Virtue of Remaining Silent from Useless Talk and the Silence of Luqmān عليه السلام

[1] A 'simmīt' is a person who remains silent for long periods of time, he does not have some illness or ailment. However, when he speaks, he speaks that which is good. Many of the pious predecessors had this habit. A poet said, 'You see their beauty when they remain silent. When they speak, you hear intelligent things from them.'

You will gain benefit when you think about their gatherings, their awe, their peace, their humility and their luminous faces.

Ibn Jarīr Tabarī says in his Tafsīr (vol.21 p.67) under the verse, 'and indeed We gave Luqmān wisdom', 'Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says that He gave Luqmān عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ understanding of religion, accuracy in speech without bestowing Nubuwwah upon him.'

'Amr Ibn Qays says, 'Luqmān was a dark skinned slave. He had thick lips and broad feet. A man came to him when he was in his gathering. He was teaching and guiding them. The man said to him, "Were you not the same person who used to herd sheep in a certain place?" Luqmān replied, "Yes." He asked, "How did you reach this high level and position that I see?" Luqmān replied, "By speaking the truth and remaining silent in matters that do not concern me."

Ibn Abī Hātim narrates from Sayyidunā Abū Dardā' رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, the Sahābī who was given the title of Hakīm-ul-Ummah, that he said, "Luqmān the Wise was not given the lofty position he had because of family, wealth, rank or physical appearance. Rather, it was because he was a person who used to remain silent. He used to ponder and reflect for long periods. He would look deeply into matters. He never slept during the day. No one ever saw him spitting or blowing his nose. He never urinated or relieved himself in public, he never took a bath in public, he never engaged in futility, and

His wisdom has caused him to remain silent.[1] The ignorant person will think him to be a person who speaks useless things; whereas giving advice for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ made him speak.[2] The ignorant person will think him to be

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he never laughed. He was given this lofty position due to all of this. (Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr vol.5 p.381)

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ blessed him with wisdom. He had many great qualities and attributes. You must strive to emulate him.

[1] In Kitāb-ul-'Ilm p.114, Abū Khaythamah Nasā'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I found some people who were such that if they had to sit amongst the masses, they would think that he has some problem in speaking. This person has no problem in speech. Rather, he is a great jurist." It is also narrated from Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, "A jurist will be sitting amongst the people and some will feel that he has some problem in speaking. He has no problem in speaking. The reason for his silence is that he disliked becoming popular."

[2] This person is very similar to the person described in a poem, 'He smiles when people speak good. However, when evil is done, he lowers his head and becomes displeased.'

With regards to such people amongst the pious predecessors and those who followed them, it will be

rich, whereas abstinence has made him rich. The ignorant person will think him to be poor, whereas his humility has made him lower himself.

A person like this does not get involved in matters that do not concern him. He does not strive to do those things that are over and above necessity. He does not take anything that he does not need. He is not negligent of something that he has been entrusted with. People are at peace with him, whereas he toils over himself. He has killed his greed through abstinence. He has destroyed avarice through taqwā, and he has extinguished his desires through knowledge.[1]

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correct to say, 'Whenever they speak, they speak the truth. Whenever they remain silent, they cannot be surpassed.' This means that they do not leave out any chance to do good or to express the truth. If it was not for them, we would not have known the difference between the truth and falsehood, nor would the beautiful be known from the ugly. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ be pleased with them.

Shaqrān Al-Qayrawānī Advises Dhun-Nūn Misrī

[1] Words of advice and wisdom similar to these are narrated from Shaqrān Al-Qayrawānī. He was the Shaykh of Dhun-Nūn Misrī, Sahnūn, 'Aun Ibn Sayf and other luminaries. He

was unique in terms of worship, abstinence and reformation. He passed away in 186 A.H and lived for more than seventy years.

It is mentioned in Ma'ālim Al-Imān fī Ma'rifah Ahl Al-Qayrawān vol.1 p.283, 'Dhun-Nūn Misrī went to him to benefit from his company and discourses. He stayed with him for seventy days. After this time, he decided to return home. He asked for some advice on this occasion. Shaqrān رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "You must know that the food of a person who is abstinent is whatever he gets. His house is whatever he finds; his clothing is whatever covers his private area. Remaining in solitude is actually his gathering, the Noble Qur'ān is his speech, Allāh is his close friend, Dhikr is his companion, abstinence is his ally, silence is his love, fear is his goal, desire for Allāh is his conveyance, advice is his main concern, contemplation is his worry, patience is his pillow, the sand is his bed, his brothers are the truthful, forbearance is is bosom friend, reliance on Allāh is his earning, hunger is his soup, and Allāh is his help.'

Dhun-Nūn Misrī said, "I asked him, "May Allāh shower His mercy on you. How can a person progress in this world?" He said, "By taking stock of himself and admonishing it. This is sufficient for you for now. This is enough."

So, be like this, and adopt the company of those like this.[1] Follow in their footsteps and adopt their character.

Dhun-Nūn Misrī said, "I heard him saying in one of his talks, "The one who relies on Allāh will have self-sufficiency. The one who does not rely on Allāh will be always tired. The person who is grateful will have his needs fulfilled. The person who is pleased will have well-being. Looking at the people in darkness is a calamity. Remaining away from this is the best way to take."

The Virtue of the Company of the 'Ulamā' & the Pious

[1] These are the people whom Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ refers to as the 'Ulamā' of the hereafter. He differentiates them from the 'Ulamā' of the world. If you do what they do, you will be counted amongst them. If you stay in their company, you will be resurrected with them and you will be successful because of staying with them. Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Allāh has angels that travel the world. When they climb up to the heavens, Allāh asks them, despite knowing better than them, "Where have you come from?" They say, "We have come from Your servants on the earth. They praise You, glorify You and beseech You. They ask You for forgiveness." Allāh says, "I have forgiven them. I have given them whatever they

have asked for and I have given them protection from whatever they seek protection from." The angels say, "O our Rabb, there was a sinful person amongst them. He was only passing by and sat with them." Allāh says, "I have forgiven him as well. They are a people with whom even the wretched one is not deprived." (Muslim)

Poetry on the Virtue of Remaining in the Company of the Pious

A poet says, 'Through remaining in the company of the pious, you will be counted amongst them. Therefore, you should not be seen attaching yourself to anyone besides them.'

Shaykh Bashīr Al-Ghazzī wrote about this. He wrote in Persian, but then put his lines into Arabic. He increased the beauty of his words through this. He used the Halabī sand as his spokesperson. This sand is famous amongst the people by the name of 'baylūn baurad'. This sand is soft and fine. It is mixed with fragrant powder, rose and musk. It is dried. Then a paste is made of it using boiling water. The paste is used on the body and leaves behind and extremely beautiful fragrance. He said, 'One day I saw in the bathroom, in the palm of my beloved. It left a mark and then its fragrance. I said to the soil, 'Are you musk or a perfume?' You have caused me to become enamoured by my beloved.' The sand

Such people are a treasure.[1] The one who sells them for this world is deluded.[2] They are a security in the time of calamity and a protection amongst friends. If you become needy, they will make you self-sufficient. When they call on Allāh, they will not forget to include you in their du'ā', 'They are the

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replied, 'I was ordinary sand. I stayed with the rose who made me noble. I was attached to the seniors and I increased in knowledge. Similarly, whoever will remain with the 'Ulamā', he will be honoured.'

[1] By referring to them as a safe treasure, the author is saying that there is total goodness by remaining in their company and benefitting from them is a certainty. There is no trial in it, nor are there any bad consequences by adopting their company. On the contrary, if someone had to find a buried treasure, it will become a trial for him in his religion, his trustworthiness, his character and his ways. It will bring harm to him in his life in this world and in the hereafter. For this reason, the author says that they are a safe treasure, and not a buried treasure. May Allāh have mercy on Al-Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He had great foresight.

[2] If a person acquires this world and he does not get the company of such pious people, then he is deluded and deceived by his happiness with this world, instead of being happy with them.

group of Allāh. Know well, the group of Allāh are the successful.' (Sūrah Mujādalah, 22)

You must know, may Allāh open my heart and your heart through understanding, may He illuminate my bosom and your bosom with knowledge, may He join our intentions with conviction, – I found the source of every calamity entering the heart because of excesses committed.[1]

Tasawwuf refers to Abandoning Excesses

[1] Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'He is correct in this. Imām Abū Sa'īd Ibn Al-'Arabī Al-Basrī was a scholar who wrote many books and was one of the narrators of Sunan Abū Dāwūd, said, "The entire Tasawwuf is based on abstaining from excesses. True recognition of Allāh is based entirely on acknowledging your ignorance. Abstinence is based entirely on taking only what is necessary. Dealings are based entirely on adopting the best option and then the next best. To remain pleased with one's lot is based on staying away from raising objections. The well being of a person is based on the absence of formalities.' (Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.3 p.852)

The basis of this is coming into the world with ignorance[1] and forgetting the hereafter after having knowledge.

Before starting any Profession, find out the Status of the Wealth in it in the Light of the Sharī'ah

[1] It is due to this that we find find so much unlawful wealth in the hands of the people and so little lawful wealth. This is because they go into occupations, whether it is business, some craft or farming without seeking advice from the Sharī'ah. Therefore, disputes and unlawful earnings come about. When this happens, the character and deeds of people become corrupted. Therefore it is said, "When you consume Harām, you will disobey Allāh, whether you intend it or not. When you consume Halāl, you will obey Allāh, whether you intend it or not."

In Jāmi' Al-'Ulūm wal-Hikam vol.1 p.204, Hāfiz Ibn Rajab رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'Know well that there are many dealings contrary to the Sharī'ah happening, they have no basis in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. The cause of them is leaving out the commands and prohibitions of Allāh. If a person who wants to do something had to ask what is the command of Allāh before doing it, what the prohibition of Allāh is, and he follows the command of Allāh, then everything will happen in accordance to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. What a

The way to be saved from this is to leave out every unknown thing in the light of caution and piety[1] and to take every known thing with conviction.[1]

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beautiful instruction this is. Act on it. When a person does something in accordance to his opinion and desire, then most of what happens after that is against the command of Allāh. Many times, it becomes difficult to refer people to the appropriate commands that are mentioned in the Noble Qur'ān and Sunnah because the people are very far away from these sources.

An Example of the Piety & Abstention of Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

[1] Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was very cautious and he would ensure that he is safe. 'Allāmah Ibn Hajar Haytamī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'Abū Hanīfah sent some goods to his partner in which there was a defective garment. He instructed the partner to sell it and show the defect that was in it. The partner sold it without showing the defect to the customer as he forgot. The buyer did not even know about it. When Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ came to know, he gave the value of the goods, amounting to thirty thousand Dirhams, in charity. He also dissolved his partnership with that person. (Al-Khayrāt Al-Hisān p.43)

The Caution of Ibn ‘Abdur Rahīm Al-Maqdisī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

Here is another example of caution. There are many examples of this nature in the history of the pious predecessors. Ibn Al-‘Imād says under the biography of Imām Shams-ud-Dīn Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdur-Rahīm Al-Maqdisī that Dhahabī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, ‘He was an Imām, a jurist, a scholar of Hadīth, an abstinent person, a dedicated worshipper, a person who had plenty of goodness, someone established in piety, and a person who took very little from the world.’

He was digging at Mount Sālihiyyah for some need; he found a jar of gold Dīnārs. His wife was with him. When he saw the gold coins, he said, ‘To Allāh do we belong and to Him is our return’. He thought that this was a test and trial. He filled that area of ground, as it was before, and said to his wife, “This is a test. The rightful owners are people whom we do not know.” He took a promise from his wife not to mention it to anyone and not to go towards it. She was a pious woman, as he was a pious man. They left it out of caution despite their need for it. This is the peak of caution and abstention. (Shadharāt-udh-Dhahab vol.5 p.406)

[1] This means taking something that one has conviction of it being permitted. If you have a doubt about anything, or

something is not clear, then do not decide on it using your intellect alone. This is because it becomes strong and gets weak. It is also affected by emotion and other external factors. The Sharī'ah is the best guide in all matters that you want to enquire about or that you doubt about.

Poetry about a Muslim Seeking Guidance from the Sharī'ah before Turning to his Intellect

I found these wise words on the back of a book,

'The Sharī'ah is best guide in the darkness of doubts. The intellect is subservient to it. Were it not for the intellect, we would have been like animals. Follow them both, and if someone criticizes you about them, tell him, "O animal, stop'

The words 'yā bahīmah' are alluding to something. They actually mean 'O person, stop criticizing me for following the counsel of the Sharī'ah and the mind that is made luminous through it' as they are made up of 'yā bahi'. The words have been put in this way and are used in speech and writing like this. Mus'ab Ibn 'Abdullāh Az-Zubayrī said that his father said to him, "O my son, only the intelligent person will understand the witty speech." The poem just mentioned affirms the statement of the 'Ulamā' that the Sharī'ah protects the intellect and the intellect is a light for the Sharī'ah.

The Intellect is Always in Need of the Sharī'ah

Imām Rāghib Isfahānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Adh-Dharī'ah ilā Makārim Ash-Sharī'ah about the link between the intellect and the Sharī'ah. The crux of it is, 'The Sharī'ah is the leader and the intellect follows. The Sharī'ah comes before the intellect. The intellect is always in need of the Sharī'ah. The commands of the Sharī'ah are like food that protect the health and the intellect is like medicine for one's health. The intellect and the Sharī'ah are like twins. One supports the other. They cannot do without without each other. They are linked to one another and do not conflict. There is therefore no need to reconcile them.'

He then says, 'The different forms of pleasure like clothing, drink, things that are heard and seen, they are all subservient to animalistic desires. They are more because they were present in man already. Man now needs to subjugate these through the intellect. For this reason, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Jannah is surrounded by difficulty and Jahannam is surrounded by desires." Every person has the ability within himself to acquire some virtue.'

The intellect cannot understand and fathom the pleasures of the hereafter. It cannot recognize them. For this reason, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ has made them easier to understand by stating various examples that man can fathom and perceive,

I have found that the corruption of the heart results in the corruption of the body. Do you not see that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, 'Know well, there is a piece of flesh in the body. If it is reformed and sound, the entire body will be sound. When it is corrupt, the entire body will be corrupt. It is the heart.' (Bukhārī, Muslim) The meaning of body here is Dīn. This is because through Dīn, the limbs of a person will be reformed or corrupted.[1]

'The example of Jannah that has been promised to the Allāh-fearing is that it has rivers of water, which will never change in taste, rivers of milk whose taste never changes, rivers of wine, delicious to those who drink, rivers of honey, pure and clear, and they will have in it every type of fruit and forgiveness from their Rabb' (Sūrah Muhammad, 15)

[1] Shaykh Ahmad Ibn Raslān رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says towards the end of Matn Az-Zubad, 'You must weigh every thought in the scale of the Sharī'ah. If the Sharī'ah commands it, then rush to carry it out. If it is something you have been stopped from, then it is from Shaytān. Therefore, you must be careful of it.'

Sayyed Junayd Baghdādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'A thought crosses my mind but I do not accept it until I obtain the testimony of just witnesses; the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.'

The real reason behind the corruption of the heart is because a person does not take his soul to account, and he is deceived by long hopes. If you want your heart to be sound and correct, then stop resolutely and think about your thoughts. Follow the thoughts that were for Allāh and leave those that were for others. Seek help in overpowering long hopes by thinking and remembering death.[1]

The Age of a Person Passes Quickly and His Life Ends Soon

[1] Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to say, "Everyday we hear that so and so has passed away. A day will come when it will be said, 'Umar has passed away'. Sayyidunā 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to say, 'Everyday you are going backwards and death is coming towards you. How soon will the meeting be.' (Nahj-ul-Balāgha vol.4 p.78)

Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, 'O man, you are made up of days. Every day that passes, a part of you goes away.' (Tārīkh-ul-Islām, Dhahabī vol.4 p.104)

A poet has mentioned this statement of Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ as follows, 'A man is naught but a rider, riding on the back of his life. He is on a journey that wears him down by the passing of the days and months. He spends the night and evening every day and night far from the world, going closer to the grave.'

I have found the basis of excesses coming from the heart, showing themselves upon the ears, eyes, tongue, food, clothing, and his house. The excesses of the ears comes out to forgetfulness and negligence. The excesses of the eyes comes out to negligence and confusion. The excesses of the tongue comes out as making up things and innovation.[1]

The following poem draws a picture of the shortcomings of life, 'The passing of the nights makes a person happy, whereas their passing means his passing away too.'

A poet says, 'The adhān called out upon the birth of a child and the delay for the Salāh indicates tht life is very short, a short time like that between Adhān and Salāh.'

[1] Some copies have the words stating that if a person willfully adorns his speech and tries to be eloquent, he speaks useless things and its take him to sin.

Atā' Ibn Abī Rabāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ warns about Useless & Vain Talk

Ya'lā Ibn 'Ubayd said, "We went to visit Muhammad Ibn Sūqah Al-Kūfī. He was a great worshipper, a pious man, a Muhaddith amongst the Tābi'īn. He said, "Shall I not tell you something that could benefit you? It has brought great benefit for me. 'Atā' Ibn Abī Rabāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The people of before did not like excesses in speech. They considered this

The excesses of food comes out towards greed and desire.[1]

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to be: anything besides the Qur'ān recited, anything besides commanding good and forbidding evil, or that a person speaks about besides his needs in his life.

Do you deny the verses, 'Indeed there are angels guarding over you, noble scribes.' 'They are on his right and left, he does not utter a word but a watcher is there by him, ready.' Are you not ashamed that when your record of deeds will be opened in front of you, in which you dictated throughout the day, most of what it contains has nothing about your religion or your worldy matters."

Ismā'īl Ibn Umayyah said, "Atā' used to remain silent for long periods of time. When he used to speak, we used to think that he is being helped." (Hilyah vol.3 p.314, Siyar A'lām An-Nubalā' vol.5 p.83)

Balance & Moderation is required in Service to the Body

[1] By this, the author indicates that increase in provision and food and engaging deeply in it takes a person towards greed, then towards urges and desires that would bring harm to him in terms of Dīn as well as his body. Therefore, the duty of an intelligent person, even if he were wealthy, would be to adopt balance and moderation in eating and drinking.

Excesses in clothing ends up in boastfulness and pride. Excesses in housing takes a person to waste and haughtiness.[1]

Being stingy in this regard is harmful. In the same way, resorting to excessiveness is also harmful.

In Sayd-ul-Khātir, Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'It is not appropriate for a person to burden his body with that which he cannot bear. This is because the body is like a conveyance. If a person is not soft with it, it will not show attachment to him. Eating excessively brings harm to the body and a person will not be able to do good. Therefore, refrain from this. I am not asking you to eat delicious food excessively. I am only asking you to eat that amount that is sufficient to look after yourself and I am stopping you from eating that which will be harmful for you. Excessiveness in eating brings sleepiness. Greed causes blindness to the heart and weakens the body. The best path to adopt is moderation.

Different Types of Excesses or Extravagance

[1] In clarifying the different types of excesses, further detail is given hereunder:

1. Excess in speech. This means saying something that you were not asked about, or it is not the occasion to

say it, or you delve into issues that do not concern you

2. Excess in food and drink. This means that you eat to more than your fill, you eat different types of dishes or prepare a large amount of one dish.
3. Excess in sleep. This means a person sleeps more than necessary. Alternatively, a person stays awake without there being any benefit in staying awake.
4. Excess in clothing. This means buying more clothing than what you need for the different seasons of the year and for occasions that are permitted by the Sharī'ah.
5. Excess in housing. This means that ones house is more than what one needs, going into luxury, pride, and ostentation.
6. Excess in possessions. This means storing ones possessions which are over and above ones needs.
7. Excess in sight. This refers to your looking at things that do not concern you and is of no benefit to you. As for things that are not permitted in Sharī'ah, that is Harām.

Know that protecting the limbs is obligatory and leaving out excesses and extravagance is a virtue. Repentance before this is a duty. Allāh and His Rasūl صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ have obligated it. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'O you who believe, repent to Allāh, a sincere repentance.' (Sūrah Tahrīm, 8) The meaning of

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8. Excess is friendship or companionship. This means that you accompany everyone that you see or know. This excludes befriending a pious person, and a righteous person that pleases you.
9. Excess in spending. This means spending your wealth in those things that you do not need, or on things from which there is no benefit.
10. Excess in knowledge. This means asking about something that you do not need to know at the moment or in the future.
11. Excess in books. This means keeping books that are of no benefit, or do not form part of your field of study.

sincere in the verse is to refrain from going back to whatever you repented from.[1]

The Incident of Repentance of Fudayl Ibn ‘Iyādh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

[1] This is the incident of Fudayl Ibn ‘Iyādh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and his repentance. He was a highway robber who took a turn and became an ascetic person, a great worshipper of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, and then he became a great scholar of Hadīth. He would then invite to Allāh, through his noble ways and speech. All of this happened when he heard the Qur’ān with his mind and heart. He turned to Allāh with a true and sincere repentance.

Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, ‘He is the ascetic and great worshipper of Allāh, Fudayl Ibn ‘Iyādh At-Tamīmī Al-Yarbū’ī Al-Khurāsānī, Al-Makkī. He passed away in 187 A.H. May Allāh have mercy upon him. ‘Abū ‘Ammār Husayn Ibn Hurayth, a student of Fudayl says, ‘I heard Fadl Ibn Mūsā saying, “Fudayl Ibn ‘Iyādh was a thief, a highway robber between Abīward and Sarakhs. The reason for his sincere repentance is that he fell in love with a young woman. When he was climbing the wall to her house, he heard someone reciting the verse, ‘Has the time not come for the believers for their hearts to submit to the remembrance of Allāh?’ (Sūrah Hadīd, 16)

He heard this and said, 'Indeed, my Rabb. The time has come." He went away from there. He sought refuge in a ruined building at night. When he entered it, he saw a group of travelers inside. He heard one of them saying, "Let us go now." Another person said, "We must rather wait until the morning because Fudayl wil be waiting in ambush on the road to rob us." Fudayl said, "I thought to myself that I am spending the nights in sin, whilst a group of Muslims are waiting in fear because of me. I think that the reason Allāh sent me to them was so that I can shiver and tremble out of fear for Him. O Allāh, I repent to you. My repentance is that I shall live in the area of the Ka'bah." He then moved to Makkah Mukarramah, settled down there and lived in that area until he passed away there.

Ibrāhīm Ibn Ash'ath, the attendant of Fudayl said, "I have not seen anyone besides Fudayl in whose heart Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى was the greatest. If the name of Allāh was taken in front of him, or if he heard the Qur'ān, fear and grief would overcome him. He would then shed tears and cry so much that those sitting near him would feel sorry for him." Rabāh Ibn Khālid said, "'Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak said, "When I look at Fudayl, my grief is refreshed and hate my self." He then started crying. (Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.8 p.294)

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "O people, repent before your Rabb before you pass away,[1] gain closeness to Allāh through good deeds before you become engaged."[1]

My brothers, repentance that burns the heart is like this, it brings true illumination.

Glad Tidings for the Person whose Sins stop with his Demise

[1] If a sinful person repents from his sins before he passes away, it is a gift from Allāh. There are many people who leave this world without repenting for their sins. Their sins then remain with them. Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Glad tidings for the one who passes away and his sins die with him. There is a long lament for the person who passes away and his sins remain with him for a hundred years, two hundred years, or even longer. He is punished for them in his grave and he is questioned about these sins right until the end. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'We record whatever deeds they have done'. Allāh also records what they left behind, i.e. the traces of their deeds, which they set as an example for those behind them and which was acted upon. Similarly, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'Man will be informed on that day of whatever he sent forth and whatever he left behind.' (Sūrah Qiyāmah, 13)

Repentance (Taubah) will not be correct except with four things: to stop the heart persisting in returning to the sin, to seek forgiveness with remorse, to return all the rights and dues that one owes to others, to safeguard the following limbs; the ears, the eyes, the tongue, one's smell, the hands, feet, and the heart. The heart is the leader of all of them. It is through the heart that the body will be either righteous or corrupt.

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى has given order and prohibitions on every part listed above. It is a duty to adhere to them. In addition, He has given some chance or leeway between the commands and the prohibitions. Staying away from these actions is a virtuous deed.

What he left behind is his evil deeds and ways that others have emulated. (Ihyā vol.2 p.74)

Those at the top of this category are the evil rulers and their laws that contradict the Sharī'ah, the authors of dirty literature, those who call towards sin and entrench it in the hearts of the people, those who compose shameless and lewd songs, and those similar to them. When such people die, their sins do not die with them.

[1] Ibn Mājah vol.1 p.573

The duty of the heart, after īmān and repentance is to sincerely do deeds for Allāh. To have good thoughts when in doubt,[1] to have reliance on the promise of Allāh, to fear His punishment and to hope for His kindness.[2]

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[1] This means that when you see a pious person doing something doubtful, then have good thoughts about him. The duty of a Muslim is to have good thoughts about a fellow Muslim.

[2] O my brothers, you flee from everything that you fear, except Allāh. If you fear him, you will run towards Him. He is the One Who is feared, the One in Whom people place their hopes, the One from Whom protection is sought. Therefore, the person who fears Allāh flees from his Rabb towards His Rabb. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'So run to Allāh, indeed I am a clear warner to you from Him.' (Sūrah Dhāriyāt, 50)

Sayyidunā Barā Ibn 'Azib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates a Hadīth of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, where he mentions a Du'ā' to be recited before going to sleep, 'there is no place of refuge and no place of salvation from You except You.' (Bukhārī, Muslim)

Sayyidah Ayesha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ used to make du'ā' whilst in Sajdah when performing Salāh at night, 'O Allāh, I seek protection in Your pleasure from Your displeasure. I seek refuge in Your forgiveness from

There are many narrations about the meaning of 'Qalb'. From among them is, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "There are some believers for whom my heart will be soft." (Musnad Ahma vol.5 p.267) Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ also said, "When the

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Your punishment. I seek refuge in You from You. I cannot encompass Your praise. You are as you have praised Yourself.' (Muslim)

Imām Nawawī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, 'Imām Abū Sulaymān Al-Khattābī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "This Hadīth has a subtle meaning. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ sought refuge in Allāh and asked Him to give him refuge with His pleasure from His displeasure, with His forgiveness from His punishment. Pleasure and displeasure are opposite to each other. Similarly, forgiveness and punishment are opposites. When Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ went to something that has no opposite, i.e. Allāh, he sought refuge in Him from Him, and not from someone else. The meaning of the Hadīth is that seeking forgiveness for one's shortcomings in fulfilling one's duties to the full degree is the duty upon the servants of Allāh. Similarly, it is their duty to praise Him." (Sharh Sahīh Muslim vol.4 p.204)

truth comes, it has a light on it. Therefore, you must be cautious about the secrets of the hearts."[1]

Sayyidunā Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "The hearts have desire and the urge to move forward. They also feel lazy and want to move back. You must therefore, make the best of the opportunity when they have the desire to and urge to move forward. You must leave them when they are lazy and want to move back." (Al-Hilyah vol.1 p.13)

Ibn Al-Mubārak رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "The heart is like a mirror. If it remains for very long in the hand, it will become rusty. It is also like an animal. If the owner neglects it, it will become thin."[2]

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[1] Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "I have not come across this narration in the Hadīth books that I have checked. And Allāh knows best."

A Moment of Negligence can be a Means of Difficulty and Problems

[2] The negligence of the heart can become a means of problems and difficulty. This could cause you to stray from the main path for a long distance. The poet of Islām, Muhammad Iqbāl said, 'A person was walking in a desert. From a distance, he saw a conveyance, hoping that it would

Some wise people said, "The heart is like a house which has six doors. Then you are told, 'Be on your guard, nothing should come to you from any of the doors, otherwise it will destroy your house.' Therefore, the heart is the house. The doors are: the tongue, the eyes, the ears, the ability to smell, the hands and the feet. If any of the doors are unwittingly opened, the house will be destroyed.

The duty of the tongue is to speak the truth during times of happiness and anger, to stay away from harming anyone in private and in public, and to refrain from pretending with good and evil.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Whoever gives me guarantee of what is between his jaws and what is between his legs, I give

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have some means to rescue him from destruction. He hastened towards it, bare-footed, panting. He was hoping that he will be saved once he reaches it. A thorn then pricked him in his foot. He turned his attention away from the conveyance for a moment to take out the thorn from his foot. Suddenly, the conveyance disappeared from his sight. His hopes vanished and he was in regret. Therefore, the duty of a person seeking something is that he should not turn his attention away from it until he acquires it – even if he experiences difficulties and hardships on the way.'

him guarantee of Jannah in the name of Allāh." (Bukhārī. Ibn Battāl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'This Hadīth shows that the greatest test on a person in this world is his tongue and his private part. The person who is saved from their evil will be saved from the greatest of evils.)

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to Sayyidunā Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, "It is only what the tongue utters that would throw people headlong into the fire." (Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Mājah, Tirmidhī)[1]

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "I warn you regarding excessiveness in speech. Suffice with that speech that conveys your need. A person will be questioned about his excess in speech just as he will be questioned about his waste of wealth."[2]

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[1] Ibn Rajab رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'The words of the Hadīth refer to the consequences and punishment for forbidden speech. A person sows good or evil through his words and actions. On the Day of Qiyāmah, a person will reap whatever he sowed. Whoever sowed good words and good deeds, he will reap honour. Whoever sowed evil words and evil deeds, he will reap remorse and regret.' (Jāmi' Al-'Ulūm wal-Hikam p.241)

[2] This is not a Hadīth. It is the words of a senior Sahābī, Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

said, 'Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "I warn you against excesses in speech. A person must suffice with speech that will convey his need." (Ihyā' vol.8 p.212) 'Allāmah Zabīdī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, the commentator of Ihyā' says, 'Ibn Abid Dunyā رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says in Kitāb-us-Samt, 'My father narrated that Ibn 'Ulayyah said on the authority of Layth that Sayyidunā Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "I have warned you against excessive speech. You must therefore suffice on that which would convey your needs." (Sharh Al-Ihyā' vol.7 p.466)

Sayyidunā Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ feels that speech that is more than necessary is a sin that deserves punishment. He cautioned and warned against it. Shaykh Abū 'Alī Ad-Daqqāq رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ warned against excesses in speech and excessive speech in such a way that the people of the world who are engrossed in it, and are desirous of it, can actually feel. He said, "If you had to purchase paper for the scribes who are recording your deeds, you would have stopped saying many things." (Sharh Arba'īn An-Nawawiyyah)

The Person who adopts Silence from the Truth is a Dumb Devil

Shaykh Abū 'Alī Ad-Daqqāq رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "The person who adopts silence from speaking the truth is a dumb devil." Abul Qāsim Al-Qushayrī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "Adopting silence at the time when silence is required is the quality of a man.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Allāh is present at the tongue of every person who says something. The one who truly fears Allāh is he who knows what he says." (Al-Hilyah vol.8 p.160)

The duty of the eyes is to lower them from looking at the forbidden, to stay away from trying to look at those things that are concealed.[1]

Similarly, speaking at the appropriate time is amongst the noblest of qualities."

Listen to these words, "O Allāh, make my silence a source of pondering, my speech a source of remembrance." In other words, it must please You, and it must be something for which I am rewarded.

Shaytān Beautifies the Forbidden Women for You

[1] Ibn Al-Muqaffa' in Kitāb Al-Adab Al-Kabīr p.99 speaks about women that are strangers and he warns against having any sort of relationship with them. He said, 'Whatever is beautified in the eyes and the hearts regarding strange women is nothing but deception and is baseless. In fact, many times a person who turns away from what he has (his wife) is much better than what his soul is running after.'

Imām Ibn Muflih Al-Hanbalī in Al-Furū' vol.5 p.151 says, 'An intelligent person should beware of giving his eyes a free chance. This is because the eye shows man something that is unlawful for him in a way that is not forbidden to him. It shows it to be more beautiful, more graceful, more appetizing, and more adorable and loving than the pure and permitted spouse that he has. His beautiful, forbearing and loyal partner. All this is nothing but beautification from Shaytān and an attempt to confuse him. By doing this, Shaytān wants to divert this person from the lawful and pure (his wife) and make him pay attention to the unlawful and filthy one (the forbidden person to whom he is attracted to). Alternatively, Shaytān makes him dislike the lawful spouse which he has and causes him to be attracted to the forbidden one that he does not have. The soul is not inclined to what it is familiar with, and it desires the strange and unknown. It causes a person to imagine characteristics and qualities in the new person that are not found in the spouse that he has. Shaytān uses his mischief and causes you to feel and think that what you do not have is much more beautiful and better than what you have presently.'

'This will sometimes result in intense infatuation. When this happens, the body of a person and his Islām will be destroyed. Many glances have caused calamities in the

hearts of people. Many glances were actually daggers. Many glances have caused injuries to the hearts of people.'

Al-Hākim in his Tārīkh transmits from Ibn 'Uyaynah. He said that 'Abdullāh Ibn Al-Mubārak رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said on the authority of reliable people in Syria, who said, "The person provides the causes of corruption from his side, he will never escape from them even if he refuses to do so."

Hind bint Al-Khuss Engages in Adultery with her Slave because of her staying Close to Him all the Time

Yes, letting the eyes roam freely and forbidden mixing has led to countless instances of destruction, shame and humiliation that cannot be forgotten. There was a woman by the name of Hind bint Al-Khuss. She was a leading woman in the days of ignorance. She was famous for her intelligence, her sharp mind, her eloquent speech and her words of wisdom. She committed adultery with her slave, despite being a noble person and a wise Arab woman. She was asked, "Why did you commit adultery with your slave, whereas you are a leading woman of your tribe? Why did you not commit adultery with a free person instead of him? What caused you to be duped by a slave?" She said, "Abundant closeness and proximity to him, sleeping close to him and speaking excessively with him in privacy and

staying alone with him for lengthy periods of time." These two things slowly removed her modesty from her, it took her honour and her leadership amongst her people away, and she fell into the shameful act of adultery. In addition, it was with a slave. Despite this, she gave a wise response.

Her intelligence, her wisdom and her sharp mind were of no benefit to her. Instead of all this, she went ahead and committed an indecent act, knowing how repugnant and disgraceful it is. She was also aware of the evil consequences of it. The only reason for this was that she was close to the person and spoke to him when he was unlawful for her. We seek the protection of Allāh.

The people did not like that she committed adultery with her slave. She was a free woman. A free Arab woman would naturally stay away from adultery with a slave. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ read the verse to the women when they pledged allegiance to him, 'and they should not commit adultery', then Hind, the wife of Abū Sufyān رضي الله عنه asked, "Does a free woman commit adultery, O Rasūl of Allāh? We used to stay away form this even before Islām, how can we do it after embracing Islām?" (Ibn Sa'd)

The people did not like her committing adultery with her slave because a slave has a low status. He is bought and sold; he is used to serve others and is put through great hardship.

Therefore, adultery with him was much more repugnant and it brought great disgrace to her. However, her close proximity to him and her uncontrolled speaking to him veiled her eyes and mind from thinking about all of these things.

In Al-Hayawān, Al-Jāhiz speaks about the effects of repeatedly looking at someone, being close to him or her, and continuously talking to that person. He says, 'One avenue that leads to destruction is one's gaze continuously falling on someone else. Staying close to someone for a long period and seeing that person all the time are basic causes of being put into tribulation. Hind bin Al-Khuss was asked, 'Why did you commit adultery with a slave and not a free person? What caused you to be duped by him?' She said, 'Continuously talking to him and being close to him.'

'The beauty of the person whom you do not know cannot harm you, i.e. the person with whom you have no contact. This is because if you continuously look at her, and if she has torn your heart, you know that you cannot reach her by yourself, or by letters or sending messages to her. Therefore, whatever you see of her will be like a dream or an imaginary thing that one hopes. Therefore, once the hopes fade away, and his soul returns to its normal

Sayyidunā Hudhayfah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "The glance is one of the arrows of Shaytān. Whoever will stay away from it out of the fear of Allāh, Allāh will bless him with īmān, whose sweetness he will experience in his heart." (Hākim)

Sayyidunā Abū Dardā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "Whoever turns his gaze away from looking at Harām, Allāh will marry him off to whichever damsel of Jannah that he likes. Whoever peeps into the houses of people, Allāh will raise him blind on the Day of Qiyāmah."

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condition, he will be affected by missing her in the same way as he missed her in his dream or whatever hopes he had.'

In other words, this is the opposite of what could happen if the woman is close to one and one can have access to her. The possibility of being duped by her is much stronger. Shaytān will take possession of you through her and he will be swift and effective in his move. An intelligent person is someone who will distance himself from this temptation and these avenues. In addition, he has hope for safety and well-being from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. A poet said, 'Safety from Salma and her female neighbor can only be acquired if you don't ever pass through her valley.'

Dāwūd At-Tā'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said to a person who was staring at someone else, "O man, turn your eyes away because I heard that a person will be questioned about his excesses of his gazes, just as he will be questioned about the excesses in his deeds." It has been said, "You can have the first glance, but not the second." (Ahmad, Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī.)[1]

Therefore, whatever falls onto the eyes of a person will be overlooked, but whatever a person continues to stare at, and he is fully aware of what he is doing, he will be taken to task for it.

The duty of the ears is subservient to speech and the eyes. Therefore, whatever you are not permitted to say and look at, you will not be permitted to listen to it or take enjoyment from it.

Inquiring about things that are hidden from you means spying. Listening to things of amusement, singing and everything that causes harm to Muslims are unlawful, just as

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[1] The full Hadīth is, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "O 'Alī, do not follow up a glance with another. The first glance is for you, but not the second." This means that the first glance is unintentional and will not be recorded against you, but the second is done wilfully and will be recorded against you.

a corpse and blood are unlawful. Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “We have been forbidden from backbiting and listening to it, from slander and listening to it.”

Al-Qāsim Ibn Muhammad[1] was asked about listening to singing. He replied, “When Allāh separates the truth from the falsehood, into which category will singing fall?” He said, “In the category of falsehood.” “So ask yourself.” (Dhamm-ul-Malāhī of Ibn Abid-Dunyā, Bayhaqī)[2]

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[1] Al-Qāsim Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He was one of the senior Tābi’īn. He was one of the seven jurists of Madīnah Munawwarah. He was born in 37 A.H and passed away in 106 A.H. May Allāh be pleased with him.

The Prohibition of Listening to Musical Instruments and the Calamities that it brings

[2] Sayyidunā ‘Abdur-Rahmān Ibn Ghanam Al-Ash’arī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates from Abū Mālik Al-Ash’arī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he heard Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, “There will be from my Ummah people who will consider adultery, silk, intoxicants and musical instruments to be lawful.” (Bukhārī)

In this Hadīth, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ explained that there is a strong link between these evils. Each of them invites the other and demands it. Adultery demands and requires that a person beautify himself using silk. This leads a person to

consider it as lawful. Wearing silk is forbidden for men. It also requires and demands that a person consumes intoxicants and musical instruments. All of this is in order to increase the evil of the corrupted minds of those that are involved in these evils. It is to kindle the blaze after it subsides. We seek safety and protection with Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

Imām Abul Farj Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "You must know that listening to singing encapsulates two things. Firstly, it distracts the hearts from pondering over the greatness of Allāh and makes a person negligent of obedience to Him. Secondly, it inclines a person towards immediate pleasure and pushes him onto fulfilling all his desires. The most enjoyable of which is Nikāh. In order to fulfil this, he needs to marry repeatedly and it is difficult to fulfil all his desires in the permitted way. Hence, he is inclined to adultery. So, the link between singing or music and adultery is that singing and music brings pleasure to his soul, whilst adultery brings pleasure to his body.' (Risālah fis Simā' war Raqs vol.2 p.311)

It is narrated from Wakī' Ibn Al-Jarrāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ,[1] he said, "I heard a statement from an innovator twenty years ago. I am unable to remove it from my ears until now."

Wakī' Ibn Al-Jarrāh – the Great Ascetic of Iraq

[1] Wakī' Ibn Al-Jarrāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a great Muhaddith of Iraq and a leading scholar of his time. He was born in Kufa in 129 A.H and passed away in 197 A.H. He passed away in an area called Fayd, upon the return journey from Hajj. Fayd is a small town on the main road between Makkah Mukarramah and Kufa.

He studied Fiqh, memorized Ahādīth and became very famous for his knowledge and learning. He acquired a position of being one of the leading scholars of his time. Imām Ishāq Ibn Rāhuyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said about him, "He had a brilliant natural memory, whislt we had acquired memory through much hard work." Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I have not met someone who was able to remember more knowledge and memorize more Ahādīth than Wakī'. When he speaks about Fiqh, he excels in it. He does this with great piety and striving. He does not speak ill of anyone. Wakī' is an imām of the Muslims in his era." The Khalīfah, Hārūn Ar-Rashīd, wanted to appoint him as the Chief Justice of Kufa, but he refused because of his abstention from the world and his ascetism.

Imām Yahyā Ibn Ma'īn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Wakī' was like Awzā'ī. I have not met anyone better than him. He would spend the night in worship and he would fast. He used to issue fatwā based on the view of Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ." Imām 'Abdullāh Ibn Al-Mubārak رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Today, the man of the two cities, Kufa and Basra, is Wakī' Ibn Al-Jarrāh."

Salm Ibn Junādah said, "I remained in the company of Wakī' Ibn Al-Jarrāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ for seven years. I never saw him spitting, touching pebbles, or moving about when he was sitting. I have never seen him turning away from the Qiblah, nor did I see him taking an oath in the name of Allāh."

Sa'īd Ibn Mansūr رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Wakī' came to Makkah Mukarramah. He was quite big in size. Fudayl Ibn 'Iyādh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said to him, "How is it that you are so fat, whereas you are the great ascetic of Iraq?" He said, "This is because of my happiness with Islām." Upon hearing this, Fudayl Ibn 'Iyādh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was silenced.

Once, Wakī' رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote something using the inkpot of someone else. He sent a purse of Dīnārs to the person because he used the inkpot. He also said, "Excuse me because I do not have anything else." (Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.1 p.306) May Allāh have mercy on him.

Whenever an innovator came to Tā'ūs رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ,[1] he would close his ears so that he does not have to hear him speak.[1]

The Blessing for the People of Yemen – Tā'ūs Ibn Kaysān رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

[1] Tā'ūs Ibn Kaysān رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a great Imām. He was one of the senior Tābi'īn. He possessed a very high level of understanding of the Sharī'ah. He used to narrate Ahādīth, and strive in following the commands of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. He was a devout Muslim; he stayed away from the world and possessed great virtue in Tasawwuf. He was also outspoken in admonishing the rulers.

He was born in 33 A.H, in Janad, Yemen. He was a leader in knowledge and practice. Layth Ibn Sulaym said, "Tā'ūs used to count Hadīth, letter by letter." Ibn Hibbān said, "He was a great worshipper of Allāh in Yemen. He was amongst the leading Tābi'īn. Tā'ūs رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ performed Hajj forty times. His du'ā' used to be readily accepted." Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا said, "I feel that Tā'ūs is amongst the people of Jannah." Qays Ibn Sa'd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Tā'ūs to us, the people of Yemen, is like Ibn Sīrīn to the people of Basra." Ibrāhīm Ibn Maysarah said, "Aside from Tā'ūs, I have not seen anyone who treated the higher class and lower class people equally." Sufyān Ibn 'Uyaynah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "There were three people who stayed aloof from the rulers: Abū Dharr رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ in

his life, Tā'ūs during his life and Sufyān Thaurī during his time."

Hāfiz Dhahabī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Tā'ūs رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was the Shaykh of the people of Yemen. He was a source of blessing for them. He was also their Muftī. He enjoyed a high position amongst them. He had performed Hajj many times. Tā'ūs passed away in Makkah Mukarramah a day before the pilgrims leave for Mina, i.e. 7th Dhul Hijjah, in 106 A.H. The janāzah Salāh could not be performed because of the huge crowds that had surrounded the bier. The Amīr of Makkah, Ibrāhīm Ibn Hishām, sent guards to disperse the crowds. 'Abdullāh Ibn Hasan Ibn 'Alī Ibn Abī Tālib رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ was one of the luminaries that carried his body. Whilst he carried the body of Tā'ūs رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, his hat fell off and his shawl was torn from the back. Hishām Ibn 'Abdul Malik, the Khalīfah of the time, performed the janāzah Salāh. May Allāh have mercy on him.

Examples of how the Pious Predecessors Stayed Away from the People of Innovation

[1] Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "It is said that one should not listen to a person whose heart is deviated because you do not know what he will say to you. A person from the Ansār of Madīnah Munawwarah heard something from an innovator, and that point attached itself to his heart. He would go to his friends and they would advise him. When they stopped him,

he said, “What must do with this point that has settled in my heart? If I had the knowledge that Allāh will be pleased with me if I flung myself from this minaret, I would have done so.” (Al-Jāmi’, Ibn Abī Zayd Al-Qayrawānī, p.120)

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, ‘Abdur-Razzāq narrated that Ma’mar narrated, ‘Tā’ūs رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was sitting with his son next to him. A person from the Mu’tazilah sect came to him and started speaking on a certain topic. Tā’ūs رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ put his fingers into his ears and said, “O my son, put your fingers in your ears so that you do not hear anything that this person says. This is because his heart is weak.” He then said, “O my son, keep your ears sealed.” He continued advising in this way until the other person went away. (Tārīkh Madīnah San’ā Al-Yemen p.328, Talbīs Iblīs p.12)

Ibn ‘Aun narrates, “A person came to Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and spoke something about Taqdīr. Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ replied by reciting a verse from the Qur’ān, ‘Indeed Allāh commands you with justice, good conduct, giving to near relatives and He forbids you from indecency, evil and rebellion, He gives you advice so that you take heed.’ (Sūrah Nahl, 90)

Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ then put his fingers into his ears and said, “You either get up and leave, or I shall get up and leave.” The man then went away. After he left, Muhammad

The duty of the sense of smell follows that of the ears and the eyes. Whatever is permitted for you to listen to and see, it will be permitted for you to smell. It is narrated that musk was brought to 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He blocked his nose. When he was asked the reason for this, he said, "Does a person benefit from it except by its fragrance?"[1]

The duty of the hands and legs is that a person must not extend them towards anything that is forbidden. A person must not keep them away from the truth. Masrūq رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Every step a person takes, either a good deed or evil deed is recorded for him."

The daughter of Sulaymān Ibn 'Abdul Malik wrote to 'Abdah bint Khālid Ibn Ma'dān[2], 'Come ane visit me.' 'Abdah replied,

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Ibn Sīrīn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "My heart is not in my control. I feared that he would blow something in my heart which I will not be able to remove. Therefore, I preferred not listening to what he had to say." (Tabaqāt-ul-Kubrā vol.7 p.197)

[1] This musk was from the Bayt-ul-Māl and was not the property of the Khalīfah. Therefore, he abstained from smelling it.

[2] Khālid Ibn Ma'dān رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a Tābi'ī and a reliable narrator of Hadīth. He was a great worshipper of Allāh. He

'My father, may Allāh have mercy on him, used to dislike going anywhere if he would be unable to be under the guarantee of Allāh. He disliked eating any such food, that if he were to be questioned about it, he would have no answer about it. I also dislike what my father disliked. Peace be upon you.'

If a person says, 'How can I practice on all this?' The answer would be, 'By remaining attached to the way of the pious Imāms, by looking at the mannerisms of the seekers in order to learn the steps to take, by remaining cautious by taking reckoning of ones self,[1] and by acting justly, by adopting beauty by staying away from not harming others.

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was originally from Yemen, but settled in Hims, a city of Syria. He was a brave soldier and would engage in the glorification of Allāh and worship of Allāh. He passed away in 103 A.H. May Allāh have mercy on him.

[1] This type of caution can be adopted by a person that is divinely given the ability; a person who considers the Sharī'ah in every condition and state. We present six examples of these divinely inspired people from whom you will understand the meaning of being cautious through taking an account of yourself.

Six Examples of the Pious Predecessors in their Awakened Minds for Taking an Account of Themselves

You should not forget the incident recently related, of 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, when the musk of the Bayt-ul-Māl was brought and he caught his nose so that he does not smell its fragrance. When he was asked about it, he said, 'Is there any way of benefitting from it, but from smelling its fragrance?' this is the highest example of having an awakened mind in order to take an account of ones self.

The Caution of Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ in not letting his Wife benefit when Weighing Musk

In Kitāb-uz-Zuhd, p.119, Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentions from Sayyidunā Sa'd Ibn Abī Waqqās رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, 'Musk and Ambergris came to Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ from Bahrain. Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "I hope to find a woman who is good in weighing, who would weigh this so that I can divide it amongst the Muslims." His wife, 'Atikah said, "I can weigh it nicely." He said, "No." He was asked the reason. He said, "I fear that you will take it to weigh it and then do this," and he indicated by placing his fingers on his temples. He then said, "You will wipe it on your neck, so you will get a larger share than the rest of the Muslims."

‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul Azīz Admonishes a Speaker to Indicate Using the Right Hand

In Al-Hilyah vol.5 p.326, and Kitāb-uz-Zuhd p.300, it is mentioned under the biography of ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz that he once saw a person indicating by using his left hand. He said to the person, “O man, when you speak, do not point using the left hand when speaking, use the right hand.” The man said, “I have never been through something like this. This man has buried the most beloved person, referring to his son ‘Abdul Malik, a young worshipper of Allāh, and he is worried about whether I indicate using my right hand or left hand.” ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “When Allāh takes something for Himself, then leave it. Turn away and do not bother about it.” The man said, “May Allāh reward you on behalf of Islām.” ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “Rather, may Allāh reward Islām on my behalf well.” (Hilyah vol.5 p.326)

On one occasion, Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ followed ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in this statement. A person asked him a question and he replied. The man said to Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, “May Allāh reward you well on behalf of Islām.” Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ became angry and said, “Rather, may Allāh repay Islām well on my behalf. Who am I? What

am I, that Allāh should repay me well on behalf of Islām?" (Manāqib Imām Ahmad p.275)

Hāfiz Mundhirī Lies Down on the Road and does not Sit on the Bench of a Shop

Shaykh Tāj-ud-Dīn Subkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in Tabaqāt Ash-Shāfi'iyyah Al- Kubrā vol.5 p.105 that Hāfiz Zakiy-ud-Dīn 'Abdul 'Adhīm Mundhirī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a great Imām, a pious and ascetic person. He compiled the work, 'At-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb. He further writes, 'I heard my father narrating from Hāfiz Dimyātī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ that on one occasion, Hāfiz Mundhirī came out from the bath. The heat was intense and it made him feel weak. He lied down on the road, at the side of a shop. Hāfiz Dimyātī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "O my master, let me seat you on the bench of this shop." The shop was closed at the time. Hāfiz Mundhirī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, despite suffering from the heat, "How is this possible without the permission of the shop owner?" He refused to sit there.

Taqī As-Subkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Forbids his Son from Scolding a Dog

Shaykh Murtadā Zabīdī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Sharh-ul-Ihyā' vol.7 p.566 says under the discussion of the permissibility of backbiting about a fāsiq (open sinner). 'To speak about a fāsiq and his habits in order to warn people of him has the condition before it, that the intention should be to save the people

from his evil and take the person to task and advise him. This is so that people are not deceived. If a person speaks of an open sinner in order to vent their anger, to take revenge or anything similar, then he will be sinful. Tāj-ud-Dīn Subkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ clearly narrated this from his father Taqīy-ud-Dīn Subkī. Tāj-ud-Dīn Subkī says, "I was sitting in the corridor of our house when a dog came. I said to it, "Go away, you dog, the pup of another dog." My father scolded me, although he was inside the house. I said to him, "Is a dog not the pup of another dog?" My father replied, "The condition for this is that one should not have the intention of belittling anyone." I said, "This is very beneficial advice."

Imām Abū Yūsuf رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ takes Himself to Account Before his Demise

'Alā-ud-Dīn Haskafī in Ad-Durr Al-Mukhtār with Radd Al-Muhtār vol.4 p.313 says that the student of Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Imām Abū Yūsuf رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was presented with the case of a Christian and the Khalīfah, Hārūn Ar-Rashīd. Imām Abū Yūsuf رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ passed judgement in favour of the Christian, over Hārūn Ar-Rashīd.

When Imām Abū Yūsuf رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was on his deathbed, he said, "O Allāh, you know that I was appointed to the position of Chief Justice. I never inclined towards any of the disputing parties, even in my heart, except for one case that involved a

Christian and Hārūn Ar-Rashīd. I was not fair between the parties in my heart because I hoped that the truth would be in favour of Hārūn Ar-Rashīd, although I had passed judgement in favour of the Christian." He cried when saying this.

The son of Hāmid Al-Warrāq abstains from Water before his Demise so that he could find out about its Source

In Tabaqāt Al-Hanābilah vol.2 p.177, Qādī Abū Ya'lā Al-Hanbalī mentions the incident of the son of Hāmid Al-Warrāq. He used to transcribe books and earn his living from it. This is why he was called Ibn Hāmid Al-Warrāq (a person who works with pages). He would frequently perform Hajj. Someone admonished him for undertaking many Hajj journeys due to his old age. He replied, "(Referring to himself) maybe the fake Dirhim will pass throught with the genuine Dirhams."

He departed for Hajj in 402 A.H. On this particular journey, he felt extremely thirsty at one point. One of the pilgrims brought for him some water. Ibn Hāmid Al-Warrāq was resting against a rock, on the verge of passing away. He asked the person about where he got the water. The person said, "Is this the time to ask such a thing?" He replied, "Yes,

this is the time. The time when I am going to meet Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. I have to know the source of the water."

He passed away upon the return journey from this Hajj in 403 A.H. May Allāh have mercy upon him.

Look to what a great degree of caution these Imāms went in order to take an account of themselves.

'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ feared that if his wife had to weigh the musk, the extra that would have remained on her hand will result in her receiving a share that is more than that of the Muslims. Therefore, he stopped her from fulfilling the duty of weighing the musk and distributing it.

'Umar Ibn 'Abdul-'Azīz رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was in great grief over the loss of his son. However, this did not stop him from teaching and pointing out an error that a person made. He did not allow himself to remain silent over an act of disobedience that a person committed. Therefore, he taught the person, despite his sadness, that the correct method in Islām is to point using the right hand.

The man then praised him and referred to his favour to the cause of Islām, 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul-'Azīz رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ refuted this point and said that all bounty is for Islām alone because it is Islām that taught us etiquette and good ways. Islām enables the Muslims to do great and virtuous deeds.

Hafiz Mundhirī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was very weak because of the bath that he took. He was not able to walk. Due to this weakness, he lied down on the road. His friend said to him, "I shall seat you on the bench of the shop." The shop happened to be closed. Even if he sat on the bench, it would not have caused harm to anyone. Despite his weakness, he said, "How can I sit on it without getting permission from the shopowner?" he refused to use the bench and preferred to lie down on the road. This was his action despite being the most respected and learned scholars of his time.

Taqīi-ud-Dīn Subkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ felt that his son made a mistake when he scolded a dog, belittling it. Therefore, he taught his son that such a tone is not acceptable, even when scolding an animal, even it be a dog.

Imām Abū Yūsuf رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ felt that the inclination of his heart and his desire was that the truth be in favour of Hārūn Ar-Rashīd, and not in favour of the Christian. This was something he feared about, he feared being punished by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. The inclination of his heart seemed a sinful deed to him. Therefore, he cried whilst leaving this world.

Ibn Hāmid Al-Warrāq رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ felt that he rather pass away out of thirst than allowing water to go down his stomach when he was aware of the source of it. This is because he wanted

You must show kindness without making your favour known, you should show good manners without having jealousy, be content by preferring indifference, remain silent for long periods of time in order to be at peace[1] and remain humble before the creation without staying aloof from them.[2]

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to meet Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى in a pure state, inward and outward, regarding what he would be questioned about.

See what high ranks they had. A poet said, 'They were true men. It is wrong to address someone as 'a man' if he does not have the qualities that those men had'

[1] If you are in a gathering for a long time and you feel that there is no goodness in it, then get up for your own safety, and do not remain there. The Tābi'ī, Muhammad Ibn Shihāb Zuhrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "When a gathering is very long, then Shaytān has a part in it." (Muqaddimah Ibn Salāh p.211, Tārīkh Ibn Asākir p.152)

[2] The people have a difference of opinion about the meaning of 'humility'. The best explanation is the one given by Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. Hishām Ibn Hassān رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Some people were speaking about humility in the presence of Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He remained silent. They continued speaking about it. He said, "I see that you have discussed the topic of humility at length." They said, "What is humility? O Abū

Be inclined to the remembrance of Allāh in solitude, free your heart for service to others, keep your thoughts and concern gathered, seek salvation in the path of steadfastness. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'Indeed those who said, 'Our Rabb is Allāh, then they remain steadfast, they will neither have fear, nor will they grieve." (Sūrah Ahqāf, 13)

Sufyān Ibn 'Abdullāh Thaqafī رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ said, "O Rasūl of Allāh, tell me something that could hold onto firmly." Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ said, "Say, 'I believe in Allāh', then remain steadfast on it." (Muslim vol.2 p.9)

Sayyidunā 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ said, "The words 'then they remain steadfast' means that they remain steadfast for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ by being obedient to Him, they do not swerve and move away like foxes."

Abū 'Aliyah Ar-Riyāhī said, "The words, 'then they remain steadfast' means that they remain devoted to the Dīn, to inviting towards Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and to practising for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ."

Sa'īd." He said, "When a person leaves his house and he feels that every Muslim he meets is better than him." (Az-Zuhd, Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ p.279).

The basis of steadfastness is three things: following the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah, and holding onto the Jamā'ah.[1]

Which Jamā'ah is the one that a person must hold firmly to?

[1] The meaning of 'holding onto the Jamā'ah' is to remain attached to the truth and to those who uphold it, even if they may be just a few. It does not mean that you have to remain attached to the majority. Many people err in understanding this correctly. Therefore, I want to draw your attention to this.

Ibn Hazm رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said in Ihkām fī Usūl Al-Ahkām vol.5 p.87, "The Jamā'ah refers to the people of the truth, even if there is only one such person in the world. This person will still be referred to as the Jamā'ah. When Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ and Sayyidah Khadījah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا accepted Islām, they were the Jamā'ah, whilst the rest of the world besides them and Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ were against the Jamā'ah and were separated from them. There is no difference of opinion amongst the 'Ulamā regarding this.'

Ibn Al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said in Ighātha Al-Lahfān min Masāyid Ash-Shaytān vol.1p.69, 'Look at the words of Abū Shāmah in Al-Hawādith wa Al-Bida' with regards to holding onto the Jamā'ah, he says, 'It means clinging on to the truth and following it even if those who hold onto it are few and those

who oppose it are many. This is because the truth was always whatever the first Jamā'ah was on, from the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم. It does not matter how large the group of those involved in innovations may be.'

'Amr Ibn Maymūn Al-Audī رحمه الله said, "I stayed with Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه in Yemen. I did not leave him until I threw sand over his grave in Syria, when he passed away. I then remained in the company of one of the most intelligent people, Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه. I heard him saying, "Hold firmly to the Jamā'ah because the helpf of Allāh is with the Jamā'ah." One day, I heard him saying, "There will come over you such rulers who will delay the Salāh, from its fixed time. Therefore, you must perform Salāh at the fixed time. Then you should perform the Salāh with them, it will be optional for you."

'Amr Ibn Maymūn said, "I asked, "O companions of Muhammad ﷺ, I do not know what you are saying." Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه asked, "What do you mean?" I said, "You are commanding me to hold onto the Jamā'ah and you encourage me to follow it. Then, you tell me to perform my Salāh individually despite it being the obligatory Salāh, and to perform Salāh with the Jamā'ah, which is optional?"

He رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "O 'Amr Ibn Maymūn, I thought that you were the most important person in the area. Do you know what the Jamā'ah is?" I replied in the negative. He said,"The Jamā'ah is what conforms to the truth, even if you are alone."

In another narration, it says, he struck me on the thigh and said, "I am disappointed in you. The majority of the people have abandoned the Jamā'ah. Indeed, the Jamā'ah is that which concurs with the obedience of Allāh."

Nu'aym Ibn Hammād رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "If the Jamā'ah degenerates, you must hold onto what the Jamā'ah was on, before it degenerated, even if you are all alone. You will be the Jamā'ah at that time." (As-Sunnah vol.1 p.109)

In Al-Faqīh wa Al-Mutafaqqih vol.2 p.191, Khatīb Baghdādī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ narrates from Sayyidunā Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he said, "The Jamā'ah is the Noble Qur'ān and the Sunnah, even if you are alone."

Another narration states, 'The Jamā'ah refers to those who hold onto the truth even if you are alone."

Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said similar things in I'lām Al-Muwaqqa'īn vol.3 p.409. Then he said, 'Some people have made the Sunnah into Bid'ah and good into bad because they are in the minority in the different areas and places. They claim,

Know well that the way that will save a person is to practice on knowledge, to adopt the fear of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, to remain self-sufficient with Allāh. Therefore, engage yourself in

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'Those who are isolated will be isolated in Jahannam.' However, they do not know that an isolated person is the one who opposes the truth. Therefore, if all the people, except one, oppose the truth, then all of them will be the one who are isolated. That one person will be the Jamā'ah.'

The general people, except for a few, took their own path in the time of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. That group was the Jamā'ah. The judges, Muftīn, the Khalīfah and their followers were the ones who were isolated in reality. Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ alone was the Jamā'ah. The intellects of the people could not understand this, and they said to the Khalīfah, "O Amīr-ul-Mu'minīn, are you, your judges, your ministers, the jurists, and all the Muftīn on falsehood, and only Imām Ahmad is on the truth?" He could not understand this. He started to flog Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and tortured him after imprisoning him.'

The truth and the supporters of the truth were victorious and the claims of the Khalīfah and his supporters were proven wrong.

reforming your ways, remain dependent upon your Rabb and stay away from doubts.[1]

The Definition of Doubt, its Effect on the Heart and Prohibition for staying with it

[1] Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said in Miftāh Dār-us-Sa'ādah p.152, 'Doubt is something that comes over the heart, it acts as a barrier between the truth being shown to it. Some people are such that doubt comes into their heart with the first attack on it. This is because the person has very little knowledge and has no insight. The slightest doubt in his heart causes him to have misgivings and become uncertain.

On the other hand, if a person who has firm knowledge has uncertainties that equal the number of waves of the ocean, they will not remove his conviction, nor will they cause any doubt in him. He is deep in knowledge; doubts do not cause any disturbance to him. In fact, if they come to him, the soldiers and armies of knowledge push them back and defeat them.

When the heart of a person has the reality of knowledge, then these doubts do not have any effect on it. In fact, the knowledge of a person and his conviction will become further strengthened by pushing them back and recognizing their useless nature. However, when the heart of a person does not have the reality of knowledge, then doubt creeps in

with the first attack on the heart. If he does not push it back, then similar doubts will come up, one after the other, until the person will become an embodiment of doubt and misgiving.

There are two armies of falsehood that attack the heart of a person: the first is the army of deviated desires and the second is the army of baseless doubts. Therefore, whichever heart is ready and will drink from this, and will become filled with it. The tongue and limbs of a person will then act in accordance to these doubts and uncertainties. If the heart took in the doubts of falsehood, then doubts, misgivings and uncertainty will come from his tongue. An ignorant person feels that it is the result of his vast knowledge, but in reality, it is the result of the lack of knowledge and lack of conviction.

Shaykh-ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said to Ibn Qayyim, when he asked question after question, "Do not make your heart into a sponge for doubts and uncertainty, because it will absorb these doubts and uncertainties and it will splash out those very same things. Make your heart like a plain glass. Doubts and uncertainty will pass over it without remaining there. The heart will see them with its purity and it will push them back using its strength. If your heart had to take in every doubt that passes through you, it will become

an abode of uncertainty." I do not think that I gained such great benefit regarding pushing back uncertainty and doubt as I benefitted from this advice.

A doubt or uncertainty is referred to as such because the truth becomes confused with the falsehood that is in it. It causes a person to wear the shirt of truth on a body of falsehood.

Most people look at outward beauty. A person thus looks at the external clothing and feels that it is genuine. If a person has been blessed with knowledge and conviction, he will not be deluded. Instead of this, his sight will go to the internal aspect, to what is under the clothing, and the reality will be exposed to him.

For example, if we look at a fake coin. An ignorant person will be deceived and will think that it is a genuine coin after looking at the external silver on it. If a person has genuine insight regarding this, he looks at what is beneath and knows that it is fake. Beautiful and eloquent words for doubts are the same as the little silver on the surface of the fake coin. It is only Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ Who knows how many people this deception has destroyed.

Stay away from presenting your needs in front of people. Like for them what you like for yourself. Dislike for them what you dislike for yourself.

Never consider a sin as small. Never share a secret. Never expose a private matter. Never should you think about committing a sin. Never continue persistence in a major sin.

Seek refuge with Allāh during the time of every need. Turn to Allāh in every situation. Place your trust in Him in every matter.[1]

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[1] The reality of Tawakkul (trust in Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ) is keeping the means and effects proven. Whoever negates them, his Tawakkul is a mere joke. This contradicts the first thing that comes to mind, that affirming the causes (Asbāb) is a means of tainting one's Tawakkul. However, this is not the case. The Tawakkul of those who reject the means will never remain firm. Tawakkul is a very strong means in acquiring that which is relied upon. Tawakkul is like Du'ā' which Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ made as a means of acquiring whatever a person asks for.

The Hadīth of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ to the Bedouin proves this, the Bedouin asked, "O Rasūl of Allāh, should I leave my camel and then place my trust in Allāh?" He said, "Tie it and then place your trust in Allāh." (Ibn Hibbān)

Stay away from desires. Do not remain content with yourself in waiting for an opportunity. Remain unrecognized, remain grateful to Allāh, seek forgiveness in abundance, and take lesson through reflection.[1]

Prepare yourself using knowledge in case you fall into temptation. Hold firmly onto remaining collected during occasions of haste. Adopt good manners when mixing with people.[2]

Do not become angry with people for yourself, but become angry over yourself for the sake of Allāh. Do not respond to any wrong done to you by wronging the opposite party. Stay away from praising a person who is ignorant of his own self.

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[1] This means that you must ponder over what you think and take lesson from it. That which has no result, do not think about it

[2] Ruwaym Ibn Ahmad Baghdādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said to his son, "O my beloved son, "O my beloved son, turn your deeds into salt and your manners into flour." This means that your manners must be so much like the amount of of salt that is added to the flour to make dough to bake the bread. An abundance of manners with a few good deeds is much better than many deeds with very few manners. (Al-Furūq vol.3 p.96)

Do not accept the praises from anyone for yourself. Laugh less and refrain from joking.[1]

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[1] Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to say, "In this world, grief innoculates a person from good deeds, the laughter of a believer is negligence of the heart and abundance of laughter kills the heart." (Al-Hilyah vol.2 p.133)

The Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ used to Joke with One Another and throw Melon Peels at each other, but they were the True and Real Men at the time of Truth

If you say, 'Did the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ not joke and laugh?' I shall reply in the affirmative. However, their laughter and joking was not like that of the people engaged in play and amusement. The Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ used to laugh and joke, but when they had any responsibility, they proved to be the true and real men.

The Tābi'ī, Bakr Ibn 'Abdullāh Al-Muzanī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ explains the condition of the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and says, 'They used to laugh and joke and throw melons at each other, but when any matter of truth came to them, they proved to be real men." (An-Nihāyah)

In Manāqib Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ p.311, Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says from the great Tābi'ī, Abū Salamah Ibn 'Abdur Rahmān Ibn

Hide your pain, show abstinence and rely upon Allāh in the heart,[1] safeguard yourself from poverty, be patient over whatever afflicts you, be pleased with whatever Allāh has destined for you, have conviction in the promises of Allāh, be wary of His warnings.

Do not exert great difficulty in order to acquire what you have been given sufficiently.

Do not waste what you have been appointed to seek.

Remain in need of Allāh in whatever He has given and seek salvation from Him.

Forgive the one who oppresses you, give to the one who deprives you and maintain relations with the one who severs them from you.[2]

'Auf رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, "From the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, if there was anything directed against him regarding his Dīn, you would see the whiteness of his eyes turning as though he became insane."

[1] Have realiance upon Allāh in your heart because He is the Being who does not go against the one who trusts Him.

[2] Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Send gifts for the one who does not send any gift to you. Visit the person who does not visit you." (Al-'Ilal wa Ma'rifah Ar-Rijāl vol.1 p.97)

Give preference to the one who loves you for the pleasure of Allāh and spend your life and wealth for your brothers.[1]

Be mindful of the rights of Allāh in your Dīn. Do not think that any of your good deeds are great. At the same time, do not think that any sin you commit is small or minor.[2]

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[1] A great Tābi'ī, Muhammad Ibn Al-Munkadir رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was asked, "Which deed is most beloved to you?" He said, "Giving happiness to a believer." He was asked, "What do you desire?" He said, "Giving benefit to my brothers." (Ibid vol.1 p.33)

The Provision of a Guest Comes with him

In Mu'jam As-Safar, Hāfiz Salafī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'Ahmad Ibn Yūsuf Ibn Nām Al-Ya'murī said the following to me, in the presence of the mnister, Abū Hasan Ja'far Ibn Ibrāhīm, 'Why should I not love the guest, why should I not experience comfort at being happy with him, when the guest is eating his provision with me and yet he thanks me for it?'

[2] Do not consider any sin to be insignificant. This is because looking at a sin in abundance is the same as committing it. When this will happen, the hearts will become devoid of the light of diffentiation and rejection. When evil will come frequently over the heart and the eyes see it repeatedly, the serious nature of it will slowly leave the heart to such an

Be on guard of the plotting of the heart, because Allāh has ways to punish.

Stay away from showing knowledge, as you stay away from ostention in deeds. Do not ever have the belief regarding internal etiquette that outward knowledge will break it.

Obey Allāh, even if it means disobedience to the creation. Do not obey people if it entails disobedience to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. Do not spare any effort to please Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى and do not be pleased and satisfied with yourself for a deed that you did for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى.

Stand before Allāh in Salāh with total humility.[1]

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extent that a person will see these evils, but he will not even consider it as evil, and he will not even think that they are sinful deeds. The heart has now become used to them. (Fayd-ul-Qadīr vol.2 p.399)

Why has Salāh been commanded with the words 'Establish Salāh'?

[1] Stand before Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى with your being in entirety. Your heart, body, and mind. Together with this, perfect the postures and etiquettes of Salāh. This is the basic meaning of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى repeating the words 'establish salāh' in the Noble Qur'ān.

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ did not use the direct command in the Noble Qur'ān. The meaning of establishing Salāh is that one must complete the Salāh by fulfilling all the fundamentals, all the internal and external prerequisites. Establishing Salāh in this way has great benefit. A person will acquire benefit for himself and the Ummah.

Part of establishing Salāh is that a person must fulfil its rights outwardly and inwardly. Outwardly, a person must have tranquility and humility in Ruku' and Sajdah. One must ponder and think over whatever he is reading or whatever du'ā' he makes or hears from the Imām.

On the inside, he must be aware of the fear of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, that he is standing in front of Him. Therefore, no matter how great something might be, it should not distract him from Salāh. Because of this lofty position of Salāh, the first thing that Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ asked from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ for himself and his family was for Salāh to be established. He made du'ā', 'O my Rabb, make me a person who establishes Salāh and from my children.' (Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 40)

It is because of the high position of Salāh that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ asked Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ to command his family to establish Salāh and be patient over any difficulty that he experiences in establishing it.

'Command your house folk to establish Salāh and persevere on it. We do not ask you for provision, We grant provision to you, the good end is for those of taqwā.' (Sūrah Tāhā, 132)

When Salāh will be done as commanded by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, the benefit of it is that a person will be saved from every kind of immoral thing and it will stop him from every evil. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'Establish Salāh. Indeed Salāh stops you from immorality and evil.' (Sūrah 'Ankabūt, 45)

One of the benefits of Salāh is that it makes a person habituated to feel that difficulties are insignificant and he bears them with a peaceful heart and firm intention. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'O you who believe, seek help through patience and Salāh. Indeed Allāh is with those who are patient.' (Sūrah Baqarah, 153)

One of the excellent results of Salāh is that it wipes out sins and mistakes. Which person is there who has not committed sin? Only those whom Allāh protects are saved. Therefore, we are all in great need of this cleansing action of worship. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'Establish Salāh at the two ends of the day and during part of the night. Indeed good deeds wipe out evil deeds, that is an advice for those who heed.' (Sūrah Hūd, 114)

Pay the Zakāt with eagerness and enthusiasm, the Zakāt that Allāh made obligatory upon you. Protect your fasting from

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Among the fruits of Salāh is that it puts a barrier between the person and his roaming in anguish and miserliness. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى says, 'Indeed man has been created restless. When misfortune comes over him, he is impatient. When good fortune falls to his lot, he becomes miserly, except those who perform Salāh. Those who are constant in Salāh.' (Sūrah Ma'ārij, 19-23)

Despite all of this, if we see someone performing Salāh and he does not acquire these valuable benefits, then we have to say that his Salāh is not the Salāh that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى commanded His servants to establish. His Salāh resembles the Salāh of those whom Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى describes, 'When they stand up for Salāh, they stand lazily, to show the people. They do not remember Allāh except for a little while.' (Sūrah Nisā, 142)

May Allāh save us from evil through His grace and favour. Āmīn

lies and backbiting. Consider the rights of neighbours, the poor and the relatives.[1]

Being a Good Neighbour is the Quality of a Muslim

[1] Try to become a person who desires to be a good neighbor, someone who is beloved, be like the person whom the poet describes,

'I envy your neighbor for being your neighbor. Glad tidings for the person who is a neighbor to you. If only your neighbor would sell to me a hand span of his house and I would give him an entire house in return.'

We shall mention three incidents here where high prices of houses were demanded because the neighbours were very good.

There was an old woman who lived next to 'Abdullāh Ibn Tāhir, the Amīr of Khurāsān. This was during the 'Abbāsid Era. The old woman passed away in 230 A.H. This old woman left four daughters. Someone told her, "You are quite poor. Why do you not sell your house and you can then spend that money on yourself and on your family?" She replied, "Yes. I can do that. However, I cannot sell being the neighbor of 'Abdullāh Ibn Tāhir, no matter the price."

When this answer reached ‘Abdullāh Ibn Tāhir, he called for the old woman. She said, “I have four daughters. Look for four noble husbands for them.” He did this and gave them each a hundred thousand Dīnārs.

‘Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had a Jewish neighbor. This Jewish neighbor wanted to sell his house. Someone asked him, “How much do you want for the house?” He said, “Two thousand.” The person said to him, “The value is only one thousand.” The Jew replied, “What you say is correct. However, I want one thousand for the house and one thousand for being the neighbor of ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak.”

When ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak was informed of this, he called the Jew, gave him the money for the house and said, “Do not sell it.” (Al-Makārim wal Mafākhir p.23)

Abū Al-Jahm Sulaymān Ibn Al-Jahm Ansārī Al-Kūfī (a Tābi’ī), sold his house for a hundred thousand Dirhams. He then asked the buyer, “How much are you going to pay for being the neighbor of Sa’īd Ibn Al-‘Ās?” The buyer asked, “Is being the neighbor of someone something that is sold?” He said to the buyer, “Give me back the house and take your money. By Allāh, I will never leave being the neighbor of someone who is such that when I am at home, he asks about me. When he sees me, he welcomes me. When I go somewhere, he looks after me. When I am present at home, he draws me closer to

him. When I ask him, he fulfils my needs. If I do not ask him, he gives me on his own. When I have any need, he relieves me."

When Sa'īd heard this, he sent a hundred thousand Dirhams to this neighbor.

Beware of being such neighbors that people flee from him and they are prepared to sell their houses at the cheapest price because of you. A poet describes his bad neighbor,

'They rebuke me for selling my house cheaply, but they do not know that there is a neighbor who spoils my life. I said to them, "Definitely the price of the house increases and drops because of the neighbor."

The high-ranking Tābi'ī, Abul Aswad Du'alī, had a house in Basra. He had a neighbor troubling him all the time. He sold the house because of this. Someone asked him, "I heard that you sold your house." He said, "Nay, I have sold my neighbor." This became a proverb. (Wafayāt vol.1 p.241)

The proverb is, 'I have sold my neighbor, not my house.' In other words, I liked the house, but the neighbor was not a good person. Therefore, I sold the house." (Majma' Al-Amthāl p.68)

Teach good manners to your family. Show kindness to those under your control. Be just, as Allāh as commanded you. When you are encouraged to do good, then hasten towards it. If there is something doubtful, then abstain from it.[1]

Show mercy to the sinners and continue advising the believers. Speak the truth wherever you may be. Do not form a habit of taking oaths excessively, even if you are speaking the truth.[2]

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[1] Whenever Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had a choice between two things, he would choose that which was more reliable. He narrates that he bought wheat for trade purposes at the price of forty thousand Dirhams. He was then informed about the source of it. He did not like the information that was given. Therefore, he left all this wheat and gave it all in charity.

The student of Muhammad Ibn Sirīn, Hishām Ibn Hassān, said, "Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ left forty thousand Dirhams for something that you would feel nothing wrong with today." (Tārīkh-ul-Islām, Dhahabī, vol.4 p.194)

[2] It is said that the sign of a liar is that he takes oaths without being asked to do so, he is generous with oaths. If possible, you should not take an oath. Sayyidunā Ibn 'Umar

Do not argue and dispute even if you are right. Adopt caution concerning speaking excessively, even if you are very eloquent. Beware of formality in religious matters even

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رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "The result of taking an oath breaking it or remorse." (Ibn Mājah)

This is because the person who takes an oath will either break his oath and he will commit a sin because of taking a false oath. Alternatively, he will regret denial of something that he was supposed to do, or something was not supposed to be done – but he does it because of his oath.

When a person says, "By Allāh, I did not do it", or, "By Allāh, I shall certainly do it", this is a type of promise that a person makes in the name of Allāh. It is possible that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will cause him to break this promise or his heart will be affected by remorse. Therefore, the duty of a Muslim is to stay away from taking oaths as much as possible. If he happens to take an oath, he must immediately say, 'inshā Allāh'. This would be much better for him in protecting his Islām and it will be more effective in safeguarding his oath. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will guide the one who seeks guidance.

if you are fully conversant with them. Put knowledge in front of everything you utter.[1]

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[1] This means that you must know the ruling about what you are going to say or do before saying it or doing it. Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "You must know that a deed is obedient to knowledge just as the limbs obey the eyesight. Knowledge with a few deeds is much more beneficial than ignorance with an abundance of deeds. The example of this is like little provision that a person must have when in a desert, whilst he knows his way. This is more beneficial than being ignorant of the way whilst having an abundance of provision. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'Say, are those who know equal to those who do not know?' (Sūrah Zumar, 9)

Three Things Must be found for a Person to Enjoy the Benefit of his Deeds

Ibn Al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in explaining the verses, 'You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path' (Sūrah Fātiha, 4-5) that in order for a deed to be successful, three conditions must be fulfilled:

1. When a person forms a resolve to do a deed, it is his duty to know whether it involves the obedience of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ or not. If it is not an act of obedience,

he should not do it unless it is an act that is permitted and it will help him to do an act of obedience. In this case, it will be considered to be an act of obedience.

2. Once it is clear to him that it is an act of obedience, he should not start doing it until he checks whether he is helped in doing it or not. If he is not helped, he should not do it, otherwise he will disgrace himself. If he is helped in doing it, he must check one more thing.

3. He must do it in the proper prescribed way. If he does not do it in the proper prescribed way, he will destroy it. He will commit mistakes or even invalidate it.

Therefore, these three factors are the basis for prosperity and success of a person. This is the meaning of a person telling his Rabb, 'You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path' (Sūrah Fātiha, 4-5)

The most fortunate of the creation are those who have obedience, help, and guidance to the objective. The most unfortunate of the creation are those who are deprived of these three things.

There are some people who have a large share of 'You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path' (Sūrah Fātiha, 4-5). Other people have a small share or nothing at all. Such a person will have position, authority, and power, but it is of no consequence. In fact, it is the worst of consequences.

There are some people who have a share of 'You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path' (Sūrah Fātiha, 4-5) but their share of guidance towards the objective is very weak. This is like the case of many worshippers whose knowledge of the realities of the guidance and true religion that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ sent His Messenger with is very little. (I'lām Al-Muwaqqa'īn vol.2 p.160)

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'By Allāh, this is a very lofty ideal on which the rays of the light of Messenger-ship shine. Every person who works towards his piety or the righteousness of the ummah needs it. Therefore, you should memorize it in word and spirit. It will certainly be of benefit to you by the will of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ.'

Faqīh Bahlūl Qayrawānī used to Fear Committing an Innovation

Qādī Iyādh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentions in Tartīb-ul-Madārik vol.3 p.89 regarding what has been narrated from the pious predecessors about placing knowledge before action. He speaks about Imām Bahlūl Ibn Rāshid Qayrawānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He was a student of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He passed away in 183 A.H. He was a senior pious and abstinent person. He was also a great worshipper of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ.

'One day, Bahlūl came in front of his friends and had his little finger covered by his hand. His family asked him for something. He tied a string around his hand in order to remind him to get what they asked for. He then thought to himself, 'I fear that I may have committed an innovation (by tying my finger in this way).' Hence, he covered his little finger lest someone saw him and did the same, emulating him.

He turned to one of his friends, secretly mentioning this to him. He told him to find out from Ibn Farrūkh, his friend, about this.

He returned and informed that Ibn Farrūkh said that Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to do this, i.e. tie a string around his little finger in order to remind him.

Hold onto fear after striving. Treat people nicely as long as your Islām is safe. Stay completely away from flattery.[1]

When he heard this, Bahlūl removed his hand from his little finger and said, "All praise is due to Allāh for not making me among those who introduce innovations in Islām."

May Allāh have mercy upon you, how this great Imām abstained from showing this thread that was wound around his finger to serve as a reminder until he learnt the Shar'ī ruling in this regard, as he feared that may be committing an act that was an innovation and was going against the injuction of the Sharī'ah. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ have mercy on him.

The Difference between Showing Honour and Flattery

[1] In Fath-ul-Bārī vol.10 p.428, Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'The difference between showing honour and flattery (mudāhanat) is that showing honour or treating people nicely entails lowering yourself before people, being kind to an ignorant person when teaching him, being kind to an open sinner when stopping him from his evil deed, abstaining from being stern to him so that his deed is not exposed, reprimanding him using subtle words and actions – especially if you are trying to win him over.

This type of showing honour and treating people kindly is among the characteristics of the believers and it is recommended.

As for flattery, it means to refer to someone showing something, whilst concealing its inner meaning. This includes continuous contact with an open sinner and showing your happiness at what he is doing without reprimanding him. This is Harām.

Another difference is that showing honour refers to using worldly means for the reformation of worldly affairs or religious affairs, or for both. Flattery refers to using religious means for the reformation of worldly matters.

Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Kitāb-ur-Rūh p.281 explains the difference between the two. He says, 'Mudārāt (showing honour) means to be very kind and subtle with a person in order to obtain the truth from him or to remove him from falsehood.

Mudāhanat means to be very kind to him to confirm his falsehood and to leave him to his whims. Mudārāt is for the believers, whilst Mudāhanat is for the hypocrite.

The example of this is like that of a person who has an abscess. A kind hearted doctor will come to him and explain the situation to him. He will then soften the abscess. When it

will ripen, he will cut it gently and easily, and will take out whatever is inside. The doctor will then apply medication on it that will stop it from getting worse and which stop it from its source.

The doctor will then apply ointment to heal the skin and let it grow again. Then, he puts something that will absorb the moisture and puts a plaster. He will tend to it until it is back to normal. Such a person is a mudārī – a person who honours and tend to something.

As for a Mudāhin, he will say to the person with the abscess, "It will not cause any harm to you. There is nothing to worry about. Just cover it with a cloth so that no one will see it, do not even bother about it."

He said this because he saw that the person was scared of getting the abscess slit. The source of the abscess becomes stronger. The pus from it increases and it caused much greater harm.

Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "A person leaves his house whilst he has his Islām with him. He then meets a person who can fulfil his needs. He says to him, "You are like this, you are like this." In this way, he pours praises upon him. However, it is highly possible that this person will not fulfil any of his needs. He then turns to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

Treat people with good character. Never be shy to say, 'Allāh knows best' about something that you do not know. Do not speak with a person who is not interested in listening to what you have to say.

Do not teach your religion to a person who wants to cause you to dislike it. Do not put yourself into difficulty which you do not have the ability to bear.

Give honour to yourself by staying away from the person who is going to dishonor you. Cleanse your intentions from evil characteristics. Befriend only the trustworthy.

Never expose your secrets to everyone. When dealing with a person, do not go beyond what he can bear. Do not address him with such knowledge that his mind cannot comprehend. Do not delve into matters that you have not been asked about.

Show respect for the gatherings of the 'Ulamā' and recognize the value of the wise.[1]

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being angry at him. He returns home with no part of Islām with him. (Al-'Ilal wa Ma'rifah Ar-Rijāl vol.1 p.268)

[1] What beautiful etiquette this is, and what beneficial characteristics you are asked to adopt!

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ remained in the company of his Shaykh, Hushaym Ibn Bashīr Al-Wāsitī for five years. He said, "Because of the awe with which I looked up to him, I never asked him concerning any matter except on two occasions." (Al-'Ilal wa Ma'rifah Ar-Rijāl vol.1 p.145)

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Acquire knowledge, acquire tranquillity and dignity in order to acquire knowledge. Remain humble before whom you are acquiring knowledge." (Al-Jāmi' As-Saghīr vol.3 p.253)

The Humility of a Student before his Teacher with Examples from the Pious Predecessors

'Allāmah Munāwī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in explanation of the words of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ 'remain humble before whom you are acquiring knowledge'; 'Knowledge cannot be acquired except with humility and listening attentively. The humility of a student in front of his teacher is a means of the student's rise in status, his humiliation before the teacher is a cause of his honour, his humility will be a cause of his greatness.

The great Sahābī, Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا, despite being a great luminary and close relative of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ held the reins of the conveyance of Sayyidunā Zayd Ibn Thābit رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ (in order to show respect

to him). Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا said, “This is how we have been instructed to treat our ‘Ulamā’.” Sayyidunā Zayd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then kissed the hand of Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا and said, “This is how we have been ordered to treat the family of our Nabī.”

As-Sulamī says, ‘No one had the courage to ask Ibn Al-Musayyib a question until he asked permission to do so, just as a person asks a ruler for permission first.’

Imām Shāfi’ī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, “When I used to turn the page of the book in front of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, I used to do it very softly so that he does not hear the page turning.”

Ar-Rabī’, a student of Imām Shāfi’ī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, “I take an oath by Allāh, I never had the courage to drink water whilst Ash-Shāfi’ī was looking at me.”

The Respect of Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in front of his Shaykh

It is narrated from Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ that he said, “I never stretched out my legs in the direction of my teacher Hammād’s house, out of respect for him. This is despite the fact that there were seven streets between my house and his house.

Every Salāh I performed after Hammād passed away, I sought forgiveness for him, together with my parents. I seek

forgiveness for all those under whom I studied or all those who taught me something."

Imām Abū Yūsuf رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, the student of Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, said, "I make Du'ā' for Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ even before I make Du'ā' for my parents. I heard Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ saying, "I make Du'ā' for Hammād together with my parents." (Manāqib Al-Imām Abī Hanīfah vol.2 p.7 by Al-Muwaffaq Al-Khawarizmi)

The Respect of Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ for Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I have not slept for the last thirty years without having made Du'ā' for Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and seeking forgiveness for him."

'Abdullāh Ibn Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I asked my father, "What type of person was Shāfi'ī? I hear you making Du'ā' in abundance for him." He said, "O my son, Shāfi'ī was like the sun to this world, and like health for the people. Now tell me, is there anything that can take the place of them? Can they be replaced?" (Tārīkh Baghdad vol.2 p.62)

The Great Right of the Teacher

Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'The right of the teacher is greater than the right of the parents. The parent is a means of the present existence of a person and this fleeting life. As for the

Do not hesitate to recompense any good that is done unto you. If you cannot do this, then make du'ā' for the benefactor.[1]

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teacher, the person who teaches good and things about the hereafter is the cause of eternal life. If it were not for the teacher, then whatever was acquired from the father would lead one towards eternal destruction. The teacher is the one who benefits you for the eternal life of the hereafter.' (Ihyā' vol.1 p.55)

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'The father who brings benefit to you is more beneficial than the father who merely caused you to be born.'

O Allāh, forgive our Shuyūkh and those who taught us. Shower Your mercy on them and honour them with Your pleasure in the real abode with You. Join us with them in the abode of Your mercy. O the Most Merciful of those who show mercy. Forgive the one who makes du'ā' for the author who hopes for the du'ā' of mercy and forgiveness.

Recompense any Favour done unto you

[1] If someone does any favour or goodness unto you, then you should not hesitate to recompense the person for the favour. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Whoever does any good unto you, recompense him. If you do not have anything with

Turn away from the ignorant person, adopt forbearance towards the foolish one, and consult those who fear Allāh in all your affairs.

Help your oppressed brother and push him in the direction of the truth if he is the oppressor. Fulfil the rights of this person which are binding on you, but do not demand your rights from him.

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which to pay him back, then make du'ā' for him until you feel that you have recompensed him." (Nasa'ī vol.5 p.82, Abū Dāwūd vol.2 p.172)

Part of giving recompense is making du'ā' for the person under whom you have studied or the person who benefitted you in any way. This was discussed before, where Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ made du'ā' for his teacher, Hammād رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. Imām Abū Yūsuf رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ made du'ā' for his teacher, Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ made du'ā' for his teacher, Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

It is mentioned that Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "A real free person is he who considers the friendship of a single moment or shows his dependence on the person who gave him some benefit, even if was a single word." (Sharh Al-Bājūrī 'alā As-Sanūsiyyah)

Adopt leniency with your debtor and show kindness towards the widows and the orphans. Honour the patient among the poor and show mercy to the wealthy who face problems.

Do not envy anyone for any bounty and do not speak ill of anyone in his absence. Shut the door of evil thoughts of others by having fear that you will be questioned about it. Open the door of good thoughts of others by having a clear and open mind.

Close the door of greed through despair and try to open the door of prosperity by adopting contentment.[1]

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[1] Contentment is true prosperity. It is a treasure that will never end. It is honour that never dies, respect that never wears out, and it brings tranquility to the heart.

Greed and dissatisfaction are illnesses that remain all the time and it is a worry that continues. It causes the heart to become restless and brings burden upon it night and day. It leaves a person only when he leaves this world.

Many Ahādīth encourage us to adopt contentment. One of them is narrated by Sayyidunā' Abū Dardā' رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, and other Sahābah, that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "That which is little and sufficient is better than that which is a lot, but distracts a person." (Musnad Ahmad vol.5 p.197)

Someone said, "Take of this world as much as you like. But take much more of worry and concern."

The intelligent beautify themselves with contentment in order to comfort their hearts and safeguard their Islām. Study the beautiful words of Imām Abul Hasan 'Alī Ibn Ahmad An-Nu'aymī Al-Basrī Ash-Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He was a noted litterateur and poet who passed away in 423 A.H. He had a significant amount of dignity and honour. He said,

'If the palms of the wretched ones have made you thirsty, then contentment is sufficient to satiate you and quench your thirst.

You should be a person whose feet are on the ground, whilst his head is in the stars.

You should be a person who totally refuses whatever you see in the hands of the one who is wealthy.

Surely, the spilling of the water of life is far less than the spilling of the water of the face.'

Keep the remembrance of Allāh pure from attributing disliked things to Him.[1]

Take full benefit from time and take recognition of the passing of your nights and days.[1]

Consideration of Etiquette in Attributing Something to Allāh

[1] Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would make du'ā' in the beginning of Salāh, 'Here I am O Allāh, I am fortunate to be here. All good is in Your control, evil is not attributed to you.' (Abū Dāwūd vol.1 p.201)

In the explanation of this Hadīth, Ibn Al-Athīr رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, 'In other words, one does not seek closeness to You through evil, nor is Your pleasure sought through evil. Alternatively, evil does not go up to You. It is only good words and good deeds that go up to You.'

These words give counsel in adopting etiquette in praising Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Good things, not evil things, should be attributed to Him. The objective is not to negate or affirm anything from His power and might. This type of etiquette in making du'ā' to Him is recommended.

For example, a person should say, 'O the Rabb of the heavens and the earth', you must not say 'O the Rabb of the dogs and the pigs', even though He is the Rabb of them.

The 'Ulamā' would Value every Moment, Khatīb Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was amongst them

[1] In other words, take maximum benefit from your time and do not leave it free by not filling it with taking benefit from it or benefitting others. This is especially the case if you are a student that is seeking knowledge. Time is your greatest wealth. The great historian and Muhaddith of Baghdad, Khatīb Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, used to read a book whilst walking in order to save time even when walking. (Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.3 p.1141)

A Rare Incident of Imām Abul Wafā' Ibn 'Aqīl Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

Imām Abul Wafā' Ibn 'Aqīl Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was born in 431 A.H and passed away in 513 A.H. He was one of the great luminaries of Islām. He was a great person in the world and was highly intelligent. He used to say, 'It is not permitted for me to waste a single moment of my life. This is to the extent that even if my tongue is unable to speak and my eyes are unable to read. I utilize my ability to think during the time of rest, whilst I lie down. I do not get up without having thought about what I am going to write.

I find the desire for knowledge whilst I am in the eighties of my life to be even more intense than my desire for knowledge when I was twenty years old. I make a great

effort to even shorten the times of my meals. I prefer eating cake that is softened with water to eating bread, because of the difference in time that it takes to chew.

I do this so that I could have more time to study or do something that is of benefit, which I would not have been able to do. Those who have been given intelligence say that the greatest thing a person can acquire is time. It is a bounty with which opportunities can be grasped because there are many responsibilities.'

Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'Ibn 'Aqīl was always busy in seeking knowledge. He had a refreshing mind. He could go into deep issues. His book, Al-Funūn, was a record of his thoughts and the incidents of his life.'

Hāfiz Ibn Rajab رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'Ibn 'Aqīl wrote many books on the different branches of knowledge. He authored approximately twenty works. The largest of these works is Al-Funūn. This book is a voluminous works that has many benefits and discusses subjects like advice, Tafsīr, Fiqh, the principles of Fiqh, the principles of religion, grammar, language, poetry, history and stories.

This work also has his debates and conversations, his thoughts, and the results of his reflective thinking.'

Hāfiz Dhahabī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'There was no larger book compiled in the world in comparison to this one. A person who saw one of its volumes said to me that the volume was after four hundred, i.e. the volume number was after four hundred.'

Ibn Rajab رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'Someone said that this book was eight hundred volumes.'

Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'When death came to Ibn 'Aqīl, and he was in his final moments, the women began to cry. He said, "I signed on behalf of Allāh for fifty years." In other words, he used to sign fatāwā in which he detailed the laws of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ in which he used to explain to the people. "So, let me rejoice meeting Him."

He did not leave behind anything except his books and the clothes he wore. His clothes were sufficient for his burial shroud and to pay his debts. May Allāh have mercy on him and reward him on behalf of knowledge and Islām.'

The jurist, 'Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak studied Fiqh under Ibn 'Aqīl. Shāfi' Al-Hanbalī told him to buy the books of Ibn 'Aqīl. He therefore sold one of his properties and used the money to buy the books of Ibn 'Aqīl. He bought Al-Funūn and Al-Fusūl. He then made these books Waqf for the Muslims. (Dhayl Tabaqāt Al-Hanābilah vol.1 p.142)

See what are the fruits of using one's thoughts. This is together with looking after one's time and continuing along the path of goodness and knowledge. These are such fruits that one cannot believe, but they are true. This bore the fruit of eight hundred volumes by Ibn 'Aqīl Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, together with another twenty books, some of which are in ten volumes.

Knowledge is like Flood Water which gathers with Many Drops

How beautiful are the words of Imām Bahā'-ud-Dīn Ibn An-Nuhās Al-Halabī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, 'Today something and tomorrow something similar to it of selected knowledge which is picked up. Through this, a person will acquire wisdom. Flood water is nothing but drops of water gathering.'

Please forgive me; I have gone to great length in this commentary. However, I hope that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ will enable you to benefit from it so that you can recognize the value of time.

Time is the cheapest thing in the hands of the ignorant, but it is the most valuable thing in the hands of the 'Ulamā' and the intelligent. It is the pillar of their knowledge and the support of their life.

You have just read about how Imām Abul Wafā' Ibn 'Aqīl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to look after his time and how desirous he was in benefitting from it. This was to the extent that he preferred eating cake that was softened with water over eating bread because of the difference in time that it takes in chewing these food items. He did this so that he would have more time to study, or be of benefit to others, or be able to engage in the worship of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ.

How Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Valued Time

Look at the condition of Imām Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He was a student of one of the students of Ibn 'Aqīl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He followed in his footsteps to such an extent that he almost became like him. You will see how he recognized the honour and value of time; how he saved time when guests visited him or when idle people came to him.

He said, 'It is the duty of a person to recognize the honour of his era and the value of his time. He should therefore not waste a single moment in anything that does not entail gaining closeness to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. He must present the best of words and deeds. His intention in matters of good should remain all the time, without any shortcoming. He should do this in way that his body does not become incapable of doing this action. A Hadīth states, 'The intention of a believer is better than his action.'

A group of the past scholars used to hasten in saving even the smallest moments. It is mentioned regarding ‘Amir Ibn ‘Abd Qays, a Tābi’ī and a great worshipper of Allāh that someone said to him, “Speak to me.” ‘Amir said to him, “Stop the sun from moving, so that time can stop.”

“I have seen the people in general wasting time in a very strange manner. If the night is long, they spend it in conversations that have no benefit. Alternatively, they spend their time in reading a book which is filled with love poetry and useless material. If the days are long, they spend it in sleeping. At the two ends of the day, they are either at the Tigris River or in the shopping areas.

Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to live in Baghdad. I therefore compare them to people talking on a ship while it is sailing away with them, they do not even know. ‘I consider the one who is busy in this world to be like a traveler, even though he may not be travelling, who is taken away without his realizing it. We are in this world like passengers on a ship. We think that it is at a standstill, while time is taking us away with it.’

I have seen very few people who really understood the meaning of existence. They are preparing their provisions and getting ready for the journey. So fear Allāh, fear Allāh in

the seasons of life. Hasten, hasten, before you lose this chance.

I seek refuge with Allāh from the company of those who waste time. I have seen many people remaining with me by making a habit of visiting me in abundance. They refer to this constant coming and going a service for me. They sit for lengthy periods whilst talking about people and other things of no benefit. Whatever comes in between all this is backbiting. This is something that many people in our times do. Sometimes, the host asks for this and awaits it. He comes out of solitude especially during occasions of happiness and festivals. You will see them walking to each other. They will not confine themselves to mere greeting and salutations. Rather, they will mix it with what I referred to previously as wasting of time.

When I realized that time was the most honourable of things, and that it is incumbent to take opportunity from it by doing good. I did not like all of that.

I was left with two options. First, if I had to reprimand them, this would result in ill feeling because the affection between us will be severed. Second, if I accepted this from them, time would be wasted. I therefore made an effort to shun meeting them. If I had no alternative to meeting them, I would speak briefly with them so that we could go our own ways as

quickly as possible. I then began doing things that would not prevent me from speaking to them when I met them.

In this way, no time will be wasted without having done something. Among the things which I did when they came to meet me was that I began cutting paper for writing, filling the pens with ink, and packing the registers. These are tasks that have to be done. They do not require any thought and presence of heart. I therefore reserved these tasks for the times when they come to visit me. In this way, no time is wasted.

I have seen a huge number of people who do not know the meaning of life. There are those whom Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى made free from the need to earn because of his abundant wealth. He therefore sits in the market place most of the day watching the people. How many harms and how much evil pass by him! There are people who occupy themselves in chess. There are those who waste time relating stories and incidents of the kings, talking about the high and low prices of commodities. I realized that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى informed of the honour of time and the importance of it to those whom He inspired and who valued it. 'None but those who have been given a great share will value it.' (Sūrah Fussilat, 35)

Renew your Taubah every time. Divide your time into three parts: One part for knowledge, one part for deeds and one part for the rights of yourself and your responsibilities.[1]

We ask Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ to help us recognize the value of time and to inspire us to derive maximum benefit from it. (Sayd Al-Khātir vol.1 p.46, vol.2 p.318)

[1] In Sahih Muslim, there is a narration from the great Sahābī and scribe of revelation, Sayyidunā Hanzalah Ibn Ar-Rabī Al-Usaydī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He said, "We were in the company of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He was speaking to us about Jannah and Jahannam. It was as though we could see all of it before our eyes.

I then went home and began laughing with my children and having light hearted talk with my wife. I then left the house and met Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. I related the entire incident to him. He said, "I also did what you just mentioned." Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and I then continued until we went to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. I said, "Hanzalah has become a hypocrite, O Rasūlullāh." He replied, "Do not say this. What do you mean?" I replied, "O Rasūlullāh, when we are in your company, you speak to us about Jannah and Jahannam in such a way that it is as though we are seeing it in front of our eyes. Then, when we leave, we begin playing with our children and have light-

hearted talk with our wives. We get engrossed in earning a livelihood. By doing this, we forget much of what you said."

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "I take an oath by the Being Who controls my life, if you continue remaining in that condition in which you were when you were in my company, remembering Allāh, then the angels will embrace you on your beds and on your pathways. If your hearts are as they are when they engage in the remembrance of Allāh, the angels will embrace you and greet you on the roads. However, O Hanzalah, little by little, little by little."

This Hadīth explains the virtue of remaining constantly in the remembrance of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, pondering over the affairs of the hereafter, remembering death, the permissibility of leaving it out at times, and the permissibility of engaging in worldly matters. (Sharh Sahih Muslim, Nawawī vol.17 p.65)

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ says, 'We also learn from this Hadīth that spending time with one's children and wife and getting engaged in worldly conversation brings negligence in the heart. However, this negligence is permitted. A person will not be taken to task for it, nor is he committing a sin. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى knows best.'

Take lesson from those that have passed away. Ponder over the destination of the two groups in front of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. One group will be in Jannah, through His pleasure and the other group will be in Jahannam, through His anger. Recognize the closeness of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى to you. Be on your guard regarding the angels who are recording your deeds.[1]

In is Necessary upon You to Consider the Right that the Protecting Angels have over you

[1] Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'Yes, they are worthy of honour. Think, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said that we should be considerate of our human neighbours. He said, 'Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ continuously advised me to be considerate of the neighbor to the extent that I thought that he would make him an heir.'

This is regarding a human neighbor, whilst there is a wall and bricks between you two. Now, what about a noble neighbor, the angel who sits on your shoulder? The angel sees every action you do – whether it is in your favour or against you. Therefore, he is more deserving of your being mindful of him. He is more deserving of consideration due to his closeness.

Shaykh Ibn Abī Jamrah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in explanation of this Hadīth of the neighbor, he says, 'If the right of the person

who is living next to you is emphasized upon you – even though there are walls between you and him, and you are forbidden from harming him in any way, and you are commanded to look after him and be good to him – then what about the two protecting angels who are watching you all the time, they have no walls or barriers between you and them? Yet, you cause harm to them with the passage of of time, by continuous mistakes and you going against the instructions of the Sharī'ah.

Look and use your intelligence. Can you really have the basic essence of īmān after doing all this? Alternatively, what is your condition? It is said that the angels recording your deeds are more pleased with the good deeds of the person than the actual person himself, when they see the rewards that he is going to get for these deeds. They grieve and worry over the evil deeds and sins of the person more than the grief of the person when he sees the recompense for those evil deeds.'

Therefore, your hurt to them is because of your sins. Yet you do not feel ashamed and stop. Wake up, O you inactive person, before the veil lifts and before the door shuts.

If you are not going to stop yourself from evil, and your neighbours are not safe from you, it is better to run away

Take the bounties of Allāh with understanding, and return them to Him by praising and thanking Him in a beautiful way.[1]

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from you, to run away from you, to run away from you. (Bahjat-un-Nufūs vol.4 p.165)

The words of the senior Tābi'ī, 'Abdullāh Ibn Mukhāriq رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ are so true, he says, 'Definitely the person who commits indecent deeds in solitude is not in solitude when he sins. How can he be in solitude when his two scribes are witnessing what he is doing and his Rabb is extremely powerful to punish?'

[1] Ubaid Ibn 'Umayr رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a great Tābi'ī who passed away in 68 A.H. He was famous for his righteousness. He was a very eloquent speaker. Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to sit in his gathering and would be greatly affected by his speech and he would cry. A very beautiful woman wanted to turn him away from his piety, but he turned her from being a seductress to a great worshipper of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. He turned her to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ by understanding the favours of Allāh upon him and showing his gratitude to Him.

A very beautiful woman who lived in Makkah Mukarramah was admiring herself in the mirror and asked her husband,

"Is there any man who will see my face and not be tempted by it?" He replied, "Yes." She asked, "Who?" He answered, "Ubaid Ibn Umair." She asked, "Will you allow me to tempt and entice him?" He agreed.

She approached Ubaid Ibn Umair pretending to ask him an important question. When they were in a corner of Musjidul Haram, she unveiled her face and it shone like the full moon. Ubaid رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ asked her, "O slave of Allah, what do wish to ask?" She replied, "Please fulfil my desires as I am in love with you." Ubaid رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ responded: "I would like to ask you a few questions. If you reply truthfully, I will consider your request."

She remarked, "I will most certainly reply truthfully to as many questions as you wish to pose to me."

Ubaid رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ asked, "If the Angel of death comes to take your soul, would you be pleased that I fulfil your request at that time?" She replied, "By Allah, never."

Ubaid رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ then said, "You have spoken the truth. If you are lowered into your grave and about to be questioned by the Angels, would you be pleased that I fulfil your request at that time?" She replied, "By Allah, never."

Ubaid رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ then said, "You have spoken the truth. If you about to cross the bridge of Sirat and you do not know whether you will make it across, would you be please that I fulfil your request at that time?" she replied: "By Allah, never."

Ubaid رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ then said, "When the scales of deeds are set up and you do not know whether the scales of your good deeds are heavy or light, would you be pleased that I fulfil your request at that time?" She replied, "By Allah, never."

Ubaid رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ then said, "You have spoken the truth. When you are standing before Allah to account for your deeds, would you be pleased that I fulfil your needs at that time?" She replied, "By Allah, never."

Ubaid رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ then said to her, "You have spoken the truth. O slave of Allah, Fear Him, as He has bestowed you with many bounties."

The woman then returned to her husband who asked, "What happened?" She replied, "We have been wasting away our lives until now."

Beware of your soul by deluding you into seeing rank and position.[1]

She then dedicated herself to salaah, fasting, and other acts of worship. Thereafter her husband would often remark, "What has Ubaid done to me? Every night she was like a bride, but now she has no inclination to the world." (Ath-Thiqāt, Ijlī vol.2 p.119)

A poet said, 'Alchemy is not about turning rocks into silver. Rather, light should remove darkness.'

[1] This means that if your soul deceives you into thinking that you have acquired a great position in the sight of Allāh, then you become suspicious of it. Beware of being deluded by what your soul shows you, or with what people say about you. You must be aware of this because this is not the way of those who have truly recognized Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and those who truly have fear for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ.

A Shameless Woman of Samarqand requests Bahlūl Qayrawānī to make Du'ā for her

Bahlūl Qayrawānī Mālikī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was one of the companions of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He passed away in 183 A.H. He was a great worshipper of Allāh and a pious luminary.

Sa'dūn Ibn Abān narrates from Dahyūn Ibn Rāshid who said, 'I was in Madīnah when I heard someone asking, "Is there anyone here from Africa?" I said, "I am from Africa." He asked, "Are you from Qayrawān?" I replied in the affirmative. He asked, "Do you know Bahlūl Ibn Rāshid?" I replied in the affirmative. He then gave a letter to me and said, "Give this letter to him."

When I returned, I gave the letter to him. He opened it and read, 'From a woman of Samarqand, Khurasan. I am a woman who has committed many shameless actions. No one has surpassed them. I then turned in repentance to Allāh. I asked about the great worshippers in this land of Allāh. I was given the description of four people. One of them was Bahlūl from Africa. I ask you in the name of Allāh to please make du'ā' on my behalf that Allāh should keep the door of Taubah open, which he opened for me.'

Upon reading this, the letter fell from his hand and he fell. He began to cry and continued crying until the letter got stuck with the tears that fell. He then said to himself, "O Bahlūl, people are speaking about you in Samarqand, Khurasan?! Destruction from Allāh be upon you if He does not hide your sins on the Day of Qiyāmah." (Tartīb Al-Madārik vol.3 p.89)

Beware of suppressing the truth by looking down on people, this is a deadly poison. Stay far away from fearing the loss of position from the eyes of the people by fearing the anger of Allāh upon you. Distance yourself from the fear of poverty by thinking about how close to death you really are. Try to hide your deeds as much as you can.[1]

Upon seeing this high position in the sight of Allāh, his fear of Allāh increased. See how he recognized Allāh and how intelligent he was.

[1] Try to hide your good deeds as much as you can so that there will be more sincerity from you and it will be more likely to be accepted by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. Study the following examples,

The senior Tābi'ī, Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a great Faqih of Iraq. He passed away in 96 A.H at the age of forty nine.

Ibn Sa'd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'Fadl Ibn Dukayn said that Mu'āwiyah Ibn 'Abdullāh Al-Yamāmī said, 'Talha related to me that when all the people went to sleep, Ibrāhīm would wear expensive clothes and apply perfume. He would then remain in in his place of worship until the morning or until whenever Allāh wills. He would then remove those clothes in the morning and where something else.' (Tabaqāt Al-Kubrā vol.6 p.276)

Hafiz Dhahabī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said about Imām Mansūr Ibn Al-Mu'tamar As-Sulamī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, 'Zā'idah Ibn Qudāmah, a student of Mansūr said, 'Mansūr kept fast for forty years and he spent the night in the worship of Allāh for the same amount of time. He used to cry the entire night.

In the morning, he would apply Surmah to his eyes, put something on his lips and apply oil on his hair. His mother would say, "Have you killed someone?" He would reply, "I know best what my soul has done." He was subsequently affected by an illness in his eyes because of his crying.

A young girl asked her father, "O my father, what has happened to that pillar that was in the house of Mansūr?" He replied, "O my beloved daughter, that pillar which you saw was actually Mansūr, i.e. he stood in Salāh for so long that it was as though he was a pillar. He has just passed away."

Thaurī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said about Mansūr Ibn Al-Mu'tamir, "If you saw Mansūr performing Salāh, you would feel that he is about to pass away." (Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.1 p.142)

May Allāh shower His mercy upon the souls of the believers that feared Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ and hid their actions. They had fear for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ in this world and they will be safe and secure when they meet their Rabb. They will be pleased in the hereafter, and Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ will be happy with them.

Strive to consult. Have love for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى with great determination. Severe relations for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى with great resolve.[1]

The Difference between ‘Azm and Hazm

[1] The lexical meaning of ‘azm is strength, patience, seriousness, making a determination to do something.

The meaning of hazm is for a person to hasten in doing something after he has resolved to do it. He fears that he will miss it if he does not hasten in doing it.

‘Allāmah Ibn Athīr رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, “Hazm refers to a person determining to do something and being on his guard lest he misses it. ‘Azm refers to being serious, patience and strength.”

The Hazm of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ and ‘Azm of Sayyidunā ‘Umar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “When do you perform the Witr Salāh?” He replied, “In the first part of the night.” This means that he would perform it before sleeping.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked Sayyidunā ‘Umar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “When do you perform the Witr Salāh?” He said, “During the last part of the night.” This means that after he went to sleep, he

would wake up during the last part of the night and perform it.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, "You practice on hazm." He said to Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, "You practice on 'azm." (Abū Dāwūd vol.2 p.89)

This Hadīth means that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had the fear that if he had to sleep first, he would miss the Witr Salāh. Therefore, he took precaution by performing it before going to sleep. Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ relied on his strength and ability of being able to wake up. Therefore, he delayed offering the Witr Salāh. There is no good in 'azm if it is not coupled with hazm. This is because if the ability and strength to do something is not accompanied by caution, it would place a person in difficulty. (An-Nihāyah fī Gharīb Al-Hadīth wal Athar)

The author, Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ means by these words (love for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى with great determination. Severe relations for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى with great resolve) is that when you love a person for the sake of Allāh, this love of yours should be with strength and determination. When you severe a relationship with someone for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, it should be with sternness, swiftness and resolve, so that this severing will be a deterrent and a reprimand for him. And Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى knows best.

Do not befriend anyone but a pious person.[1]

Only sit in the company of the learned. Mix with the intelligent and people of insight only. Become a person who follows the Imāms that passed before you, and a teacher to those who come after you. You must become a leader for the pious and a refuge for those who seek piety and righteousness.

Do not complain to anyone. Do not eat of the world in exchange of your religion.[2]

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[1] Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Remain in the company of none but a believer. Only the pious should eat your food." (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī)

Example of the Taqwā of Bahlūl Qayrawānī رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ

[2] Hereunder is an example of a person who stayed away from taking benefit from the world using religion as a means. It is mentioned in Tartīb-ul-Madārik vol.3 p.98 about Bahlūl Ibn Rāshid Qayrawānī رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, the student of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. Someone said, "Bahlūl gave one of his companions two Dīnārs to purchase oil with which sweetmeats could be prepared. Another person told this man that there is a certain Christian who has the sweetest oil in stock.

Acquire a portion of seclusion.[1]

The man went to the Christian with the two Dīnārs and said that he wants the sweet oil for Bahlūl. The Christian person said, "This is a chance for me to gain closeness to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى through Bahlūl." He gave high quality oil for the two Dīnārs equivalent to four Dīnārs of inferior quality oil. The man went to Bahlūl and told him what happened.

Bahlūl said, "You have done me one favour. Now do another. Give me my two Dīnārs back." He asked, "Why?" He replied, "I remembered the words of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى, 'you will not find a people who believe in Allāh and the Last Day befriending those who have enmity for Allāh and His Rasūl'. Therefore, I have the fear that if I consume the oil purchased from this Christian, I will experience a liking for him in my heart. If I do this, I will be among those who have enmity for Allāh and His Rasūl, just for a small portion of the world."

See how cautious he was in looking after his Islām.

Praiseworthy Seclusion

[1] Complete seclusion from people is not possible, nor is it required. According to nature, man is a sociable being. It is not possible for him to live all alone. However, limited and restricted seclusion and mixing is required during times of corruption and evil. During times like these, a person

restricts himself to mixing with those righteous people who have a similar temperament to his. He can derive benefit from their company and this will be of benefit for his Islām and ways. In addition, they will benefit from him. This is the type of seclusion that the author refers to, when he says, 'Take a portion of seclusion.'

The Seclusion of Imām Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

Imām Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Sayd-ul-Khātir pp.132, 353, 373, 398, 'The person who wants to gather his thoughts and reform his heart must beware of mixing with people in these times – the sixth century after the Hijrah – because in the past, the people would get together in order to discuss beneficial things. Now, meeting has become harmful."

'I have experienced with my soul that when I seclude it to the home, then I find that my resolve and determination is calm and composed. In addition, I am able to study the lives of the people of the past. I experience seclusion to be a defence and studying the lives of the people of the past a cure. To use a cure together with a defence from mixing is very beneficial.'

He then says, 'When I give my soul some leeway and freedom to sit in the company of the masses and to meet them, then the tranquil heart becomes scattered and uneasy.

I become distracted from what I had been guarding. Whatever the eye sees, it takes root in the heart. Whatever the ears hear, it takes root in the mind. Whatever the soul desires to acquire of the world, it becomes embedded in the innermost self. I have realized that majority of those whom I was speaking to, were people of negligence. By sitting in the company of this type, then the temperament steals from their temperament.'

'I then returned in search of my heart but I could not find it. I searched for that presence but I could not get it. My heart remains unclear for a few days after meeting with the people until a desire comes and causes it to be forgotten. So, what is the benefit of presenting a building for destruction? Surely, remaining in seclusion for a long time is like a building. Studying the lives of the people of the past raises the building. However, once a person mixes with others, then whatever was built will be destroyed in a short time. It becomes very difficult to make up for this destruction caused and the heart becomes weak.'

Dedicated worship of Allāh, abstinence and engaging with the matters of the hereafter cannot be proper without a complete severance of ties from the creation. This is to the extent that the person who does not see them and does not hear the talk except at a time of extreme necessity, like

Jumu'ah or Salāh with Jamā'ah. Even during times like these, a person must be on his guard. If he is a scholar who wants to benefit them by teaching and advising, then he must set aside a time for them and he must be on his guard when talking to them.

The most pure and wholesome life is the life when a person is secluded from the world. Knowledge is his close friend. He is happy with that which is safety for his Islām. This refers to lawful things that he acquires without difficulty and without causing harm to his Islām. He has covered himself with honour, from the disgrace of this world and the people. He enclosed himself with contentment with little when he is unable to acquire a great deal.

Through this abstention, his spiritual and material life will be safe. His occupation with knowledge pushes him towards virtue and merit; it permits him to stroll in the gardens and orchards. Through the seclusion he adopts, he is safe from Shaytān, the authorities and the masses. However, this is suited for a scholar.

If an ignorant person adopts seclusion, he will be deprived of knowledge and he will fall from grace. Many times, seclusion has caused the loss of knowledge with which the crux and essence of a person's Islām could have been reformed and corrected. Many times, this seclusion put a

Do not take anything but Halāl.[1]

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person into a calamity that caused destruction of his Islām. Seclusion is for a scholar to save himself from evil.

The Effects of Eating Halāl

[1] Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was asked, "How do the hearts become soft?" He said, "By eating Halāl." (Tabaqāt Al-Hanābilah vol.1 p.219)

Sahl Ibn 'Abdullāh Tastarī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The person who would like to be shown the signs of the Siddīqīn should not eat anything but Halāl and he should not do anything except if it is in accordance to the Sunnah."

'Abdullāh Ibn Al-Mubārak رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I prefer returning a Dirham obtained through doubtful ways than giving a hundred thousand Dirhams in charity."

The women of the past used to advise their husbands when they would leave for work. They would say, "Fear Allāh regarding us and do not feed us Harām. We can be patient over hunger and difficulty, but we cannot be patient over the fire of Jahannam." (Ihyā-ul-'Ulūm)

The senior Tābi'ī, Imām Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had a practice that when he would bid farewell to someone, he would say, "Fear Allāh, seek of the Halāl that is decreed for

Stay away from extravagance. Be content with whatever worldly possessions are sufficient.

Seek etiquette in the gardens of knowledge.[1]

Seek familiarity in places of solitude. Seek modesty in the branches of conviction, admonition in the valleys of reflection and wisdom in the gardens of fear.

Recognize the continuous kindness of Allāh upon you despite your disobedience to His commands, He pardons you despite you turning away from His remembrance, He

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you. Surely, if you take it through Harām means, you will not get more than what was destined for you." (Tabaqāt Al-Kubrā vol.7 p.201)

Bishr Al-Hāfī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, a leader in abstinence, said, "There were ten people who used to eat Halāl. Nothing but Halāl would go into their stomachs, even if they had to swallow sand. Fudayl Ibn 'Iyād was from them." (Thadhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.8 p.296)

[1] The garden is the Noble Qur'ān. The senior Tābi'ī, Muhammad Ibn Wāsi' رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The Qur'ān is the garden of those who truly recognized Allāh. So, wherever they go with it, they will have a place of enjoyment." (Hilya vol.2 p.347)

conceals your sins despite your lack of modesty in front of Him.[1]

He is independent of you despite your total dependence on Him.

Sins have a Stench and Actions of Obedience have a Fragrance

[1] You must have full conviction that sins are like poison. A small amount and a large amount both cause harm. The subtle and the open both cause harm. Therefore, do not be deceived by committing sins in privacy and seeking tricks to commit them. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ has spies from the angels who watch you.

You must also know fully well that good deeds have a special fragrance that comes out from the person, even if he tries to hide it. Evil deeds also have a stench that exposes the person even if he tries to hide it.

If you stop from the sin for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, not because of people, then a good deed will be recorded for you. In a Hadīth, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "If a person intends to do a sin, but he does not do it for the sake of Allāh, then a good deed will be recorded for him."

Where is the person who has recognized his Rabb? Where is the person who fears his sins?[1]

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[1] Tabrānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentions a narration from Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "I have not seen anything like the fire of Jahannam. The person who is supposed to run away from it is sleeping. I have not seen anything like Jannah, the person who is supposed to desire it is sleeping."

In explanation of this Hadīth, Munāwī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'In other words, the fire of Jahannam is very severe whilst those who are supposed to fear it are sleeping and neglectful. This is not the way of a person who is supposed to be running away from it. He is supposed to be running away from it and running towards good deeds.

This Hadīth has a meaning of surprise. In other words, it is very surprising that the condition of the fire is such that with all its terrors, the person who is supposed to be running away from it, yet he is still sleeping. He is neglectful and relaxing in his intoxication. How surprising is the condition of Jannah with all its joys, yet the person who is supposed to be seeking it, he is unmindful of it. (Fayd-ul-Qadīr vol.5 p.446)

Where is the person who is occupied in His remembrance? Where is the person who fears being distanced from Allāh? He is the person who is either forgiven or he is deceived. Has Allāh not seen you when you opened the veil?

Know well, O my brother, sins cause negligence.[1]

The Effects of Sin

[1] Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas’ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “I definitely feel that a person forgets knowledge which he knew on account of a sin which he commits.” (Jāmi’ Bayān Al-‘Ilm wa Fadlihi vol.1 p.196)

Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ seeks forgiveness or Performs Salāh in Order to solve any Matter

Whenever Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ experienced any difficulty in solving an issue, he would say to his friends, “There is no reason for this except that a sin was committed.” He would then seek forgiveness.

Sometimes, he would stand up and perform Salāh. The problem or issue would then become clear to him. He would then say, “I hope that my Taubah is accepted.” When Fudayl Ibn ‘Iyādh رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ heard about this, he began crying. He then said, “That is because of the very few sins which he may have done. As for other people, they do not even turn their attention towards this.” (Tabaqāt Al-Hanafiyyah vol.2 p.487)

Negligence causes hard-heartedness, hard-heartedness causes one to go far from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ and being far from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ causes one to enter the fire of Jahannam. Only the living thinks and ponders over this. As for those who are dead, they have killed themselves by love for this world.[1]

Wakī' Ibn Al-Jarrāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a senior Imām and a great personality with a very strong memory. People would strive to memorize things, whislt he could easily memorize them. 'Alī Ibn Khashram said, "I saw Wakī', but I never saw him carrying a book. He would memorize everything. I asked him about a medication for memory. He said, "Abstention from sin. I have not come across anything better than that for the memory." (Tahdhīb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.11 p.129)

Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'I complained to Wakī' about my weak memory. He advised me to stay away from sins. He told me that knowledge is light, and the light of Allāh is not given to a sinner.'

Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا says that Piety is a Light and Sin is a Darkness

[1] The author refers to some of the effects of sins. The Sahābī, Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا compared the effects of good deeds and bad deeds on the outward and inner part of man. He said, "A good deed has a light in the heart, a

splendor on the face, it brings strength to the body, it expands sustenance, and brings love in the hearts of the creation. An evil deed is darkness in the heart, ugliness on the face, weakness in the body, decrease in sustenance and hatred in the hearts of the creation."

Imām Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Explains the Effects of Leaving Sins and committing them

Imām Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has explained the harms of sin in great detail and he drew a comparison between the effects of sinning and the effects of staying away from sin. He has done this in a comprehensive manner that would push every person to give up sin, to stay far away from the causes of sin, the beautify himself with good deeds, and everything that would encourage him towards obedience.

I present the words of Imām Ibn Al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ because it has great value, it is comprehensive and true. Pay attention to it, and ponder over it. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ alone protects the pious.

He رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Al-Fawā'id, 'Sins are injuries. Sometimes, injury causes death. A person is not given a more severe punishment than hard-heartedness and being far from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. The heart that is far from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ is a heart that has become hard. After the heart becomes hard, the

eyes dry up. Hard-heartedness is due to four things if they go beyond the bounds of necessity; eating, sleeping, speaking and mixing with people.

Know well, adopting patience in abstaining from fulfilling one's desire is easier than being patient over the consequences of fulfilling the desire. Desires bring pain and punishment, it severs joy much better than it, it causes one to waste time that will result in regret. Fulfilling the desires injures the honour of a person, but its fulfilment is better than its injury. Fulfilling desires causes one to waste wealth whose ownership is better than wastage, it causes a fall in one's rank whose maintenance is better than its fall. It takes away a bounty of Allāh whose presence is much more enjoyable and more wholesome than the fulfilment of the desire. It paves the way for a disgraced person to gain power over you which he did not have before that. It brings worry, sorrow, grief and fear which are much more than the enjoyment of the desire. It causes knowledge to be forgotten whose remembrance is much more enjoyable than the fulfilling of the desire, it causes you enemy to rejoice over your problem and your friend to worry about you. It will causes the path of a bounty to be cut off, a bounty that was coming your way. It will cause a defect in you which becomes an inseperable characteristic of you. This is

because deeds brings attributes and characteristics to a person.

Allāh is Pure, He is the Rabb of the worlds. If it was not for the fact that abandoning sins and actions of disobedience causes one's self-respect to be maintained, it causes one's honour to be protected, it safeguards one's position, it protects one's wealth that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ made as an entity that holds up material and spiritual benefit. It brings the love of the creation, permits one to speak amongst them, it causes one's livelihood to be maintained, it brings comfort to the body, strength to the heart, well-being of the soul, happiness to the heart, expansion of the bosom, peace from the threats of open sinners, decrease in worries, concerns and grief. It gives honour to the soul from having to bear humiliation; it protects the light of the heart from being extinguished by the darkness of sin.

The one who stays away from sin will find a way out from the difficulties caused by the sinners, he will get ease in sustenance from avenues that he did not imagine, he will get ease in those matters that are difficult upon those busy in disobedience and sins, he will get ease in good deeds, ease in acquiring knowledge, there will be praise for him from people, there will be an abundance of Du'ā' for him, sweetness that his face will earn, there will be awe for him

in the hearts of people, they will come to his defence and help when he is harmed or wronged, they will defend his honour when any slanderer slanders him.

His Du'ā will be accepted speedily, there will be no estrangement between him and Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى, the angels will be come close to him, the devils from man and jinn will stay far from him, people will compete with each other to serve him and fulfil his needs, they will stay with him in order to win his love and company, he has no fear for death. In fact, he is happy when it comes because he is going to meet his Rabb, he is going to Him, the world will seem small in his eyes, the hereafter is very great in his eyes, he has desire for the grand kingdom and supreme triumph in the hereafter.

He tastes the sweetness of obedience, he experiences the sweetness of īmān, he will get the Du'ā' of the bearers of the 'arsh and the angels around it, he will get the happiness of the scribes that record his deeds, they will make Du'ā' for him all the time, there will be an increase in his intelligence, understanding, īmān and recognition. He will acquire the love of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى will turn to him, and Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى will be happy with his repentance.

All this should push a person to abandon sins and actions of disobedience. In this way, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى will grant him

recompense with joy and happiness which are beyond the joy and happiness that will experience when he commits a sin.

These are some of the effects of abandoning sins in this world. When he passes away, the angels will meet him by giving him glad tidings of Jannah from his Rabb. They will tell him that he has no cause for fear and he should not grieve. He will be taken from the prison and confined nature of the world to a garden of Jannah, he will enjoy himself there until the Day of Qiyāmah.

When the Day of Qiyāmah will occur, people will be in intense heat and perspiration, whilst he will be in the shade of the 'arsh. When the people will turn away from the presence of Allāh, Allāh will take him towards the right, together with his friends who had fear for Him and the group that was successful. This is the grace of Allāh, which He bestows upon those whom He wills. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ is the Possessor of Mighty Grace.

The Effects of Sins and the Sinner will be affected by Calamities

In his book, Al-Jawāb Al Kāfī liman Sa'ala 'an Dawā Ash-Shāfī, Ibn Al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentions the effects of sins. He detailed each one and explained it in detail. He gave proofs

and reasons too. This section covers over a hundred pages. I shall mention some of them here. He says, 'Sins have a horrible effect on the heart and body in this world and in the hereafter. Only Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ knows the real effect of sins.

Some of these effects are: deprivation of knowledge and sustenance, alienation and being distant from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. The sinner will be far from the people, he will get difficulty in all his matters, he will have darkness of heart, face and grave, he will experience weakness of the heart and body, he will be deprived of the ability to obey Allāh. Moreover, there will be destruction in his life. All these difficulties will give rise to other similar difficulties, these will give rise to more. Sins weaken the will of the heart and its ability to turn to Allāh, and thinking of evil to be evil will be removed from the heart.

Sins causes a person to become despicable and lowly in the eyes of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, the harm of sin reaches other human beings and animals. Sins will bring humiliation, they corrupt the intellect of a person, it seals the heart. Sins bring a person under the curse of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ, they deprive him from the Du'ā' of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ and the Du'ā of the angels for those who obey the commands of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and follow the Noble Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

Sins are a cause of the different punishments in the grave, they bring destruction on earth, in the water, the air, the crops, the fruits, the homes, they remove modesty, shame and respect for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. Sins cause Allāh to forget such a person, and in this is the real destruction.

Sins cause a person to be removed from the circle of kindness and they deprive him of the reward of the pious. Sins wipe away bounties and favours, they cause torment to descend, they cause a person to become fearful and terrified. Sins cause a lively and healthy heart to become sick and dead and it causes blindness of insight.

A sinner is the prisoner of Shaytān, he becomes a prisoner of his soul that encourages him to do evil. It confines him to the prison of lust and desire. Sins cause a person to fall from his position and rank. It takes away praiseworthy names that could be given to him and earns him blameworthy names, it wipes away the blessings of knowledge, good deeds, provision, life and all else.

Sins will abandon a person at the time of need, it causes the protecting angels to flee from him, it causes his enemies from the Shaytān to come closer to him. Sins cause disasterous effects in the heart, it causes a person to be overcome with passion, his heart will be sealed, hypocrisy

and evil traits will enter it and it will accept doubts and misgivings, and other illnesses.

In short, all the evils of the world and the hereafter which are on the hearts and bodies, the causes of them are sins and acts of disobedience.

The effects of good deeds and the effects of evil deeds have been discussed in brief by the senior Tābi'ī, Sulaymān Ibn Tarkhān Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He was a high ranking Hāfiz, Imām, Shaykh, a great worshipper and scholar. He passed away in 143 A.H. He said, "A good deed is light in the heart and strength in action. An evil deed is darkness in the heart and weakness in action." (Hilyah vol.3 p.30, Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.1 p.150)

Rain Stops as a Result of Sin

The cloud passes over a city with pure water from the clouds. It wishes to descend, but it cannot because of the evil that are found there.'

Accept my excuse for such a lengthy discussion on this topic because sin is one of the greatest ills in our effort to get salvation. We are weak, we sin abundantly and we disobey Allāh. Therefore, we are in need of being addressed by advice and admonition. Probably we will stay away from sin and make Taubah before Allāh.

Imām Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Warns Regarding Sin

In Sayd-ul-Khātir vol.1 p.185, Imām Ibn Al-Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ calls towards abandoning of sin. He says, 'Beware of sin, stay away, because they have very bad consequences. Stay away from sin, stay away, especially sins that are done in privacy. Competing with Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ causes a person to fall from the sight of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ.

The pleasure of disobedience brings nothing but negligence. A believer who is alert will not take any delight in disobedience. This is because if he delights in it, his knowledge of its forbidden nature will be in front of him. Caution from the consequences will also be in front of him. If his recognition of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ is strong, he will see Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ with the eyes of knowledge. The life of this person will be disturbed when he takes delight in sinning.

If such a person is intoxicated by his desires, the heart will be troubled by this thought. If the nature of this person is only in his desire, it will last for a moment. Then he will face disgrace forever, he will always be in remorse, crying, and he will regret what happened. This will continue for a long time, to such an extent that even if he is convinced tht he has been forgiven, the fear of being taken to task will still be in front of him.

Know well that just as the light of the day cannot help a blind person, in the same way, none but the pious can benefit from the light of knowledge. Just as medication cannot benefit a dead person, in the same way, etiquette is of no benefit to the people who persistently make assertions of themselves. Just as heavy rain cannot cause anything to

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So begone with sin. How lowly are their results. What terrible news they bring. Away with desires. If only they could be acquired to the extent of the power of negligence.

Ustād Sabā'ī says: The One who persistently Sins is an Animal

May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى have mercy on our teacher and great preacher, Shaykh Mustafā Sabā'ī. In his book, Hākadhā 'Allamatnī Al-Hayāt p.32, he says, 'When your soul resolves to commit a sin, then remind it of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. If it does not stop, then remind it of the character of real men. If it does not stop, then remind it of the humiliation and disgrace that will follow if people come to know. If it does not stop, then you must know that you have turned into an animal at that particular time.

grow on a huge rock, in the same way, wisdom is of no benefit to the heart of a person who is busy in the world.[1]

The person who is attached to desires will have very little etiquette.

The person who acts against the demands of his knowledge will become ignorant.

How can the one whose own medicine does not benefit him treat others?

Know well that the people who have the most rest and who have the least worry are those who stay away from the world.[2]

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[1] Mālik Ibn Dīnār رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ asked Hasan Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, "What is the result if an 'ālim loves the world?" He said, "Death of the heart. When he loves the world, he will seek it through deeds of the hereafter. At such a time, the blessings of knowledge will leave him and only routine will remain." (Al-Bidāyah wan Nihāyah vol.9 p.268)

The People who have a Better Life than Kings

[2] Someone asked the Tābi'ī, Muhammad Ibn Wasī' Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ to give advice. He said, "I advise you to be as a king in this world and the hereafter." He asked, "How can I do this?"

He said, "Stay away from the world." (Tārīkh-ul-Islām vol.5 p.159)

Yes, those who stay away from this world are in a much better condition than the kings, and they enjoy a much more wholesome life than them.

It is narrated about the 'Abbāsid King, Al-Mutawakkil Ibn Al-Mu'tasim, 'Fath Ibn Khāqān, the minister of Al-Mutawakkil said, "One day, I went to Al-Mutawakkil and I saw him looking down in deep thought. I asked him, "O Amīr-ul-Mu'minīn, what is the matter that you are so deep in thought? By Allāh, there is no one in the world who has a better life than you and who has a better condition than you." He said, "Definitely. The person who has a better life than me is a person who has a comfortable house, a pious wife and a livelihood. He does not know us, where we could cause harm to him, nor does he need us, where we could belittle him." (Al-Bidāyah wan Nihāyah vol.10 p.351)

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "He has spoken the truth. There is a saying in the light of what Al-Mutawakkil said – that a true king is one whom the king does not know.

I heard some 'Ulamā' in the northern part of Pakistan saying that a common person went to visit one of the rulers or

leaders of that particular place. The leader enquired about his condition. The man complained to him about his concerns and worries.

He said to the leader, "You are very fortunate. You have a good life. Your food, your drink and sleep are all good. Your life is safe from all filth and disturbing things. You are the leader. Everything is presented before you for your service." The leader remained silent.

The leader then invited the man to his house for a meal. He placed an unsheathed sword above the place where the man was to sit, suspended from above, with a weak string. The sword was about to fall. When the man saw this unsheathed sword above his head, he lost his appetite, as he feared that the sword would fall on him.

The leader said, "You should eat of all the food that is in front of you because they are delicious and good." The man said, "The food is delicious and good. However, my fear that this sword will fall on me has stopped me from enjoying this delicious food and eating it nicely."

The leader said to him, "That is exactly how my life is. You envy me for it. You desire it, without knowing what it contains. It is similar to possibility of the sword falling on your head at any moment. I am constantly under threat

Those whose hearts are the most tired and those who are the most occupied are those engrossed with the world.

The quality that helps the most in leading an abstinent life is curtailing hopes.[1]

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from an enemy or a relative who covets to rule my territory. I am in constant fear of being murdered, assassinated, having my food poisoned, being attacked when I am asleep, or a rebellion and uprising.

I experience constant discomfort and lose sleep, I have fear and dread. I have to be vigilant every single moment of my life. Actually, you are fortunate. You sleep in peace, you walk in peace, you eat in peace, and you are at peace, whether you are at home or whether you are on a journey. Therefore, you are envied for your life and it is not a person like me who is envied.

The man agreed, praised him and showed gratitude to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ for the place he was in.

[1] Sayyidunā ʻAlī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "The building of asceticism is between two verses of the Noble Qur'ān. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'So that you may not regret over what missed you and not rejoice over what came to you'. The person who does not grieve over the past and does not rejoice over what is

The condition that can take a person the closest to that of those of those who have recognized Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ is remembering that you have to stand in front of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'Be mindful that Allāh is watching you.' (Sūrah Nisā, 1)

You should know that there is no path shorter than honesty, no proof that is more decisive than knowledge, no provision more fulfilling than piety.[1]

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coming has certainly grasped the concept of asceticism from both sides.' (Nahj-ul-Balāgha vol.4 p.199)

Taqwā is the Noblest Characteristic

[1] This is the condition of taqwā. How this not be the case when Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'Take your provision, indeed the best provision is taqwā, fear Me, O people of intelligence.' (Sūrah Baqarah, 197)

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says that the command of taqwā is established and was continuous in every Sharī'ah. He says, 'We instructed those who were given the book before you and to you as well, that you should fear Allāh.' (Sūrah Nisā, 131)

In the commentary of this verse, 'Allāmah Firozābādī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ says, 'It is understood that if there was any quality in the world that was more suitable for a person, more embracing

I have not seen anything more effective in repulsing evil whisperings than abstention from futile talk. I have not seen anything more luminous for the heart than freedom of the heart.[1]

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of good, greater in terms of reward, superior to show one's servitude, greater in value, more preferable for the present, most influential for the hereafter than this taqwā, then Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ would have commanded his servants to adopt it and advised His special servants to become accustomed to it because of His perfect wisdom and mercy.'

Since seeing that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ instructed this particular quality to all His servants, and restricted Himself to it, we understand that it is the limit and none can go beyond it and no one can restrict himself before it. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ combined every advice, guidance, way, etiquette, teaching, and nurturing in this one quality. It is His words, 'Allāh only accepts from the pious ones', this shows that every matter is based on taqwā. (Basā'ir Dhawī Tamyīz fī Latā'if Al-Kitāb Al-'Azīz vol.2 p.116)

The Peace of the Heart of a Believer is a Means of Entry into Jannah

[1] Peace of the heart and freedom of the heart from malice, jealousy, deception and all other illnesses is a cause for

entry into Jannah. Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ narrates from Sayyidunā Anas Ibn Mālik رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, "We were sitting with Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and he said, "Soon a person will come before you, he is from the people of Jannah." Soon thereafter, an Ansārī companion came, he was Sa'd Ibn Abī Waqqās رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He came whilst his beard was dripping from the Wudhū' he just did. He was holding his sandals in his left hand.

The next day, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said the same thing. The same person came as he had come on the first day. On the third day, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said the same thing. The same person came in the condition as he came on the first day.

When Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ left, Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr Ibn Al-'Ās رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ followed this person and said, "I had an argument with my father and severed contact with him. I took an oath that I will not go to him for three days. If possible, please permit me to stay with you until the three days pass?" He said, "Yes."

Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ says, "Abdullāh narrated to us that he lived with the person for three days. He did not see him performing Salāh at night. The only thing he used to do was that when he turned in his bed, he would remember Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and say Allāhu-Akbar. He would spend the night

like this until he got up for Fajr Salāh." Abdullāh said, "There is one other thing. I never heard him saying anything but good."

When the three days passed, I started to feel that his deeds were insignificant. I said, "O slave of Allāh, there was no argument between me and my father, nor did I sever contact with him. However, I heard Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying on three occasions about you, "Soon a person will come before you; he is a person from the people of Jannah." On each occasion, it was you who came."

I decided to stay with you so that I may be able to see what deeds you do and I could emulate you. I have not seen you do many deeds. So, what has made you reach the position that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ described?" He said, "I do not do anything more than what you saw." When I turned to leave, he called me and said, "I do not do anything more than what you saw, except that I do not bear any malice towards any Muslim and do not envy any person for the good that Allāh has given him." Abdullāh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "This is what has enabled you to reach such a position and this is what we are unable to do." (Musnad Ahmad vol.3 p.116)

I have found the honour of a believer in his taqwā.

I have found his forbearance in his patience, his intelligence in his beauty, his love amongst people in his overlooking and forgiving and his respect amongst people in his humility and kindness.[1]

You must know that the love for wealth, whilst Allāh has chosen poverty for His servant is a cause of the wrath of Allāh. The love of poverty whilst Allāh has chosen wealth for His servant is injustice. All of this entails fleeing from gratitude because of a lack of recognition and wasting time due to lack of knowledge.

This is because poverty will not reform the faith of a wealthy person and wealth will not rectify the faith of a poor person. A Hadīth Qudsī says, 'Indeed there are from My servants a person whose īmān is such that nothing but

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The Lowliness of the World is better than the Lowliness of the Hereafter

[1] Muhammad Ibn Wasī' Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The one who is looked down upon in this world is better than the one who is looked down upon in the hereafter." (Tārīkh-ul-Islām vol.5 p.161)

poverty can set it right. If I had to give him wealth, it would corrupt his īmān.[1]

There are from My servants a person whose īmān is such that nothing but affluence can set it right. If I had to make him poor, it would corrupt his īmān."[2]

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[1] There is a saying that one of the ways of protection is that you do not get anything. In other words, poverty for certain people or at certain times becomes a means of protecting a person from falling into sin and evil.

Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Al-'Abbāsī used to drink alcohol and then stopped from it. He wrote, 'When Abū Sa'īd saw me, he said, 'I stayed away from drinking since such and such year. Now tell me, at the hands of which Shaykh did you make Taubah?' I said, 'I made Taubah at the hands of poverty.'

In other words, poverty prevents him from drinking.

[2] Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'Indeed your Rabb expands provision and He restricts it. Indeed He is fully aware of and watching His servants.' (Sūrah Isrā', 30)

In this verse, reference is made to an expansion in sustenance and restriction of it. Each one is appropriate for some of His servants and not for others.

Wealth is a trial. It leads a person to haughtiness, transgression, and acquisition of wealth from forbidden sources, spending it in the disobedience of Allāh, boasting with position that comes with wealth, being miserly in fulfilling the rights of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ and other illnesses.

Poverty is a trial. It causes a person to become jealous of the wealthy; it brings greed for their wealth, degradation of one's self to such an extent that it disgraces a person and injures his religious life. It makes a person displeased with what Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ has decreed. It also leads to other illnesses whose consequences are not praiseworthy.

Poverty is sufficient as a trial for a person on the basis that it forces some people to bribe, to steal and do other wrongs.

We can say that wealth and poverty are praiseworthy even though the majority of the scholars consider poverty safer. The condition for a poor person is to be patient. The condition for a wealthy person is to be grateful. If they do not have these qualities, then each of these, poverty and wealth, will be a trial for the people.

The summary of this is that everything that takes you closer to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ will be a blessing for you. Everything that takes you away from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ will be a misfortune for

Similarly, this will apply for health and illness.[1]

He who reconizes Allāh will never accuse Him.[2]

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you, whether it is poverty or wealth. (Mirqāt Al-Mafātīh vol.3 p.136)

[1] What the author means is what the previously mentioned Hadīth states. Allāh causes some to remain healthy because of some wisdom He has. He causes some people to fall ill because of His wisdom, i.e. they will be righteous due to illness.

The Hadīth is, 'There are from My servants he whose faith is such that nothing but illness can set right. If I had to make him healthy, it would corrupt his faith. There are from My servants he whose īmān is such that nothing but health can set it right. If I had to make him ill, it would corrupt his faith. I mould My servants according to My knowledge of what is in their hearts. I am All-Knowing, All-Aware."

[2] How can a person accuse Allāh when He says, 'Allāh has encompassed everything in His knowledge.'

Encompassing everything in His knowledge means that He knows its existence, its form, its value, its purpose, what will come out of it, its need, what would be of an advantage to it, what would harm it and what its end will be. Only Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى knows this. Whoever understands this from Allāh

He who understands from Allāh will be pleased with His decree. If the people of knowledge had nothing but the verse, 'Your Rabb creates whatever He wills and selects whoever He wants. They have no choice.' (Sūrah Qasas, 68)

Beware of the characteristics of the ignorant, sitting in the company of the sinners.[1]

Beware of the claims of the conceited, the hopes of the deluded, and the despair of those who have fallen into despondency.

Be a person who practices on the truth, who relies on Allāh, someone who commands good and forbids evil.[2]

سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى will never accuse Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى in His doings, because He is All-Knowing, All-Aware. Does Allāh not know who he created? He has full knowledge, He is All-Aware.

[1] This is because the hearts have become hard and their hearts have become dark because of sins. Sayyidunā 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ said, "Sit in the company of those who repent, as they have softer hearts." (Raudah Al-'Uqalā' p.18)

[2] 'Amr Ibn Maymūn رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ says that when Abū Lu'lū Al-Majūsī stabbed Sayyidunā 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ and the people realized that that he going to pass away, 'We went to visit him. People came and began praising him. A young person came and said, "Glad-tidings for you, O Amīr-

The person who is truthful to Allāh, Allāh will guide and help him.

The person who makes pretenses for others, Allāh will disgrace him.

The person who relies on Allāh, Allāh will suffice for him.

The person who relies on others, Allāh dislikes him.

The person who fears Allāh, Allāh gives him peace.

The person who thanks Allāh, Allāh gives him more.

The person who obeys Allāh, Allāh honours him.

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ul-Mu'minīn, with the glad-tidings of Allāh. When the youngster turned around to depart, Sayyidunā 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ saw that his lower garment was touching the ground. He said, "Bring that lad back." He then said, "O my son, raise your garment because it is cleaner for your garment and it shows greater fear for your Rabb." (Bukhārī vol.7 p.52)

Look at Sayyidunā 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He is in the throes of death. The pangs of death did not stop him from commanding good and forbidding evil and advising the young boy. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى pleased with him and may He grant us the ability to follow his ways.

The person who gives preference to Allāh, Allāh loves him.

The person whom Allāh loves, he has succeeded.

Be cautious of obeying Allāh with your intellect only,[1] whilst you act on your desires, of leaving the truth whilst adopting falsehood, and of hoping for forgiveness whilst forgetting about repentance.

You must know that knowledge and practice cannot be accepted unless they are based on certainty. If their branches grow high through truthfulness, if they bear fruit through piety, if their proof is established through the fear

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[1] What this means is that you should beware of obeying and worshipping Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ through comparing. The other meaning of this is that you should beware of your belief in Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and your allegiance to Him being on the basis of your intellect alone. In other words, that you only carry out His orders and prohibitions if your intellect accepts.

Your intellect is supposed to be subservient to the Sharī'ah in everything that the Sharī'ah orders or forbids, not the other way around. This is irrespective of whether your intellect understands or not. At the same time, whatever is proven from the Sharī'ah can never be against a normal intellect. In fact, it might be too delicate or intricate for the intellect to perceive it.

of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, and if their veils are hidden through submission.

Therefore, you should never be happy with laziness. This is because no one has an excuse of showing a shortcoming and no one can do without Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ.

You must know that from among the fortunes of a person is that he has a good intention for what is with Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ and he is given the ability to do all that which Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ loves. When Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ intends good for a person, He gives him intelligence and makes knowledge beloved to him.[1]

According to the Four Imāms, Optional Knowledge is Superior to Optional Worship

[1] You must know that to engage in optional knowledge is superior to engaging in optional acts of worship. This is the unanimous view of the four Imāms and other leading scholars in Islām.

Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمَا said, “To discuss matters concerning knowledge for a little while is better than engaging in worship for the entire night.” (Tadhkirat-ul-Huffāz vol.1 p.41)

Rabī' Ibn Sulaymān Al-Murādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I heard Ash-Shāfi'ī saying, 'Seeking knowledge is more superior than optional Salāh.'" (Al-Intiqā' p.84)

Imām Kashmīrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "Do not refute the superiority of knowledge because Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Imām Abū Hanīfah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ are of the view that remaining occupied with knowledge is better than remaining occupied with optional Salāh.

There are two views from Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. One is that knowledge is superior. The second is that Jihād is superior. This is stated by Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Minhāj-us-Sunnah. (Fayd-ul-Bārī vol.1 p.162)

Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Leaves Optional Salāh in order to engage in Discussion with Abū Zur'ah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

Imām Abū Zur'ah Rāzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was an Imām of Hadīth and a contemporary of Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. 'Abdullāh Ibn Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "When Abū Zur'ah came to Baghdad, he stayed with my father. He used to engage in discussions with my father.

One day, I heard my father saying, "Today I only offered the Fard Salāh. I gave preference to sitting and discussing with

Abū Zur'ah over optional Salāh." (Tabaqāt Al-Hanābilah vol.1 p.299)

Imām Ibn Wahb رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Leaves Optional Worship for Optional Knowledge

One of the strange things that happened to one of the Imāms of the past is that he gave up optional knowledge for optional worship. Then, one of his close friends saw a dream that caused him to stop his optional worship and return to the propagation of knowledge.

'Abdullāh Ibn Wahb Al-Qurashī Al-Misrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a great scholar of Hadīth. He was a jurist and a great worshipper of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. He was a companion of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ , Layth رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Thaurī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and other great 'Ulamā'. He passed away in 197 A.H.

Sahnūn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'Ibn Wahb divided his life into three parts: one third was for guarding the Islāmic borders. One third was for teaching the people of Egypt, and one third was for Hajj. It is mentioned that he performed Hajj thirty six times. His nephew said, "I was with him in Alexandria, guarding the Islāmic borders. Some people came to him asking him to teach. He said to me, "This is a place of worship. I hardly get time for my own self when I become busy with people. He therefore stopped sitting with the

people at those time in which he had set aside to sit with them. He turned his full attention to worship and guarding the Islāmic borders."

After two days, someone came to him and informed him that he saw himself in a huge Masjid like Al-Masjid Al-Harām in Makkah Mukarramah. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was there. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه was on his right and Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنه was on his left, you were sitting in front of him ﷺ. There were many lamps in the Masjid. They were bright and beautiful. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said to you, "O 'Abdullāh, go and light it." So you went to light it.

The same thing happened with another lamp. You remained there for a number of days and you saw all the candles that were about to go out. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه said, "O Rasūl of Allāh, do you see these candles?" Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "These are the deeds of 'Abdullāh and he wants to extinguish them."

When he heard this, he began to cry. The man said, "I have come to give you glad tidings. If I had known that this would cause grief to you, I would not have come to you." He replied, "It is better. I have been admonished through this dream. I thought that worship was superior to spreading knowledge."

When Allāh wants good for a person, He gives him fear of Him[1], uses him with kindness, makes him independent through contentment, and makes him aware of his faults.

Then he gave up many of his pursuits for the sake of knowledge. He would sit patiently in front of the people. They would read to him and ask him questions.

Ibn Wahb رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "I was sitting in front of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and was busy writing. The iqāmah was called out. Another report says that the Muezzin called out the adhān. He had a few books open in front of him. I hastened to gather and close the books. Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said to me, "Take your time. The Salāh for which you are rushing is not superior to what you are busy with. This is on condition that your intention is correct."

Imām Yahyā Laythī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, a scholar of Spain and student of Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "The person who passes away whilst seeking knowledge will be just one level lower than the Ambiyā' in Jannah." (Tartīb-ul-Madārik vol.3 p.234)

[1] In other words, Allāh gives him the fear of Allāh. This fear of Allāh was a precious quality in the pious predecessors. May Allāh be pleased with them.

Muhammad Ibn Wāsi' made Du'ā' for a person who said to him: 'I love you for the sake of Allāh'

Someone said to Muhammad Ibn Wāsi' Al-Basrī, a great Tābi'ī and student of Hasan Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. The latter gave him the name of 'The Beauty of the 'Ulamā'. He was a great worshipper of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and a Muhaddith. He would fight in the path of Allāh and would guard the Islāmic borders. He was an ascetic who shunned everything for the worship of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. A person said to him, "I love you for the sake of Allāh." Muhammad Ibn Wāsi' said, "May Allāh love you for Whose sake you loved me. O Allāh, I seek refuge with You that I be loved for Your sake whilst You are angry with me." (Hilyah vol.2 p.349)

I shall quote a few words about this person, great saint, Muhammad Ibn Wāsi' رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, so that you can learn more about him.

Ja'far Ibn Sulaymān said, "Whenever I experienced any hard-heartedness, I would go to Muhammad Ibn Wāsi' and look at his face. He was like a person who was bereaved."

Al-Asma'ī said, "When Qutaybah Ibn Muslim spent the summer months amongst the Turks and he was affected by their condition, he inquired about Muhammad Ibn Wāsi'. Someone said to him, "There he is, to the right. He is sitting

You must know that honesty and sincerity are the basis for every condition. From honesty, you will get patience, contentment, abstinence, pleasure and friendship.

From sincerity, you will get conviction, fear, love, respect, modesty and reverence.

Every believer must cross the station of these different stages and from which he can gauge his condition. He will be referred to as a fearful person, whilst he has hope in Him. He

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at the centre of his bow without inclining towards any side, moving his finger towards the sky."

When hearing this, Qutaybah said, "That one single finger is more beloved to me than a hundred thousand unsheathed swords and a hundred thousand sharp spears."

When he passed away in 123 A.H, Sulaymān Ibn Bilāl At-Taymī, a senior Muhaddith, said, "There isn't anyone's book of deeds which I would want to meet Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, except the book of deeds of Muhammad Ibn Wāsi'." (Tārīkh-ul-Islām vol.5 p.160)

'A body that is wrapped in its shroud, may the mercy of Allāh be on it.'

will be called a hopeful servant when he has fear in Him. He will be called a patient person whilst he is content.

He will be referred to as a true lover of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, whilst he has modesty. The strength and weakness of every condition will be in accordance with the īmān and recognition of the person.

Each of these condition have three signs by which the condition can be recognized.

Honesty is in three things and cannot be perfect without them:

1. Honesty of the heart through īmān
2. Honesty of intention in deeds
3. Honesty of words in speech

Patience is in three things and cannot be perfected without them:

1. Patience in abstaining from the prohibitions of Allāh
2. Patience in following the commands of Allāh
3. Patience at the time of hardship, hoping for reward from Allāh

Contentment is in three things:

1. Less wealth after finding it

2. Safeguarding of poverty at the time of want and lack of resources
3. Tranquility over the difficulties with poverty

Contentment has a beginning and a peak. The beginning of contentment is abstaining from futile things despite having means. The peak of contentment is finding prosperity despite want and lack of resources. It is from here that some scholars say that contentment is superior to pleasure. They are actually referring to perfect contentment. This is because a person who is pleased with his destiny does not change whether he is given or whether he is deprived.

As for the person who is content, he is content with his Rabb. He does not want more from his own desire, unless it be from Him in order to draw nearer to Him.

Abstention is in three things. An abstentious person is not considered to be such if he does not have these three:

1. Removing the hands from possessions
2. Purity of the soul from the lawful
3. Forgetting about the world by occupation

A person can be abstinent by three other qualities:

1. Safeguarding the soul when desires target him
2. Fleeing from places of prosperity

3. Taking a specific amount when in need of it

Friendship and kindness is in three things:

1. Being associated with knowledge and the remembrance of Allāh in solitude
2. Being amiable with conviction and cognition, together with solitude
3. Amiability with Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ in every situation

Pleasure with the decree of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ is in three things:

1. Accepting the injuctions of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ
2. Submitting to His orders
3. Abstaining from giving preference to something over what He has decreed

Pleasure with the decree of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ is the system of love, the essence of reliance upon Allāh and it is the soul of conviction.

It is mentioned that Ayyūb Sakhtiyānī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ and Fudayl Ibn 'Iyād رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ used to say, "Pleasure with the decree of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ is actually reliance upon Allāh."

These are the different branches of honesty taken with the attributes of knowledge. Sufyān Thaurī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ used to say, "If

the honesty of the honest person is perfected, he does not own what is in his hands."[1]

The Generosity of Imām Bahlūl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

[1] Imām Bahlūl Qayrawānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was one of the great scholars of his time. He came to know that Muhammad Ibn Muqātil Al-'Akkī, the Amir of Africa, had a friendly relationship with the oppressive king of Spain. This king asked the Amir to send steel, copper and weapons to him. The Amīr complied with the request.

Bahlūl confronted the Amīr, admonished him and insisted that he refuse to comply to the king's request because it is not permitted. This would entail helping the disbelievers against the Muslims.

The Amīr sent his messenger to bring Bahlūl before him. When the people heard about this, they rallied around Bahlūl. This caused the Amīr to become even angrier. He let loose his soldiers against them and dispersed the people. He then ordered that all of the clothes of Bahlūl be removed and he be lashed. A group of people surrounded Bahlūl in order to protect him. They were also lashed in the process. Bahlūl was lashed about twenty times. The Amīr imprisoned him and then later released him. The effects of the lashing

remained on his body. These wounds turned septic and became the cause of his death. He passed away in 183 A.H.

When Bahlūl was lashed and imprisoned, the warder came to him in order to tend to his wounds. Therefore, he gave him a Dīnār and Dirhams to those who were with him. He said, "Try and spend this money." He did this for three days. Every time the warder came to him, he gave him a Dīnār. His companions feared that whatever money he had will get finished before he could be cured.

They said to the warder, "He is now cured. There is no need for you to visit him." The warder stopped coming to visit. When Bahlūl saw that the warder was delayed, he asked his companions about him and said to them, "I think that you did something." It was a though he was accusing them of causing the warder not to come to him.

They said, "O Abū 'Amr, are you going to give away a Dīnār every day?" He said, "What is wrong with that?" Hafs Ibn 'Umārah, a friend of his, said in his defence, "I heard Sufyān Thaurī saying, "If the honesty of the honest is perfected, he does not own what is in his hands." When hearing this, Bahlūl kissed his hand and asked him, "I ask you in the name of Allāh, did you hear this from him?" He then took an oath in the name of Allāh that he heard it from Sufyān Thaurī.

As for the branches of sincerity, a person is not considered to be devoted to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى until he believes in Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى to be totally devoid of similarities, equals, partners, or offspring.[1]

Bahlūl really liked the words of Sufyān and was impressed by them. He kissed the hand of his friend, Hafs Ibn 'Umārah. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى shower his mercy on all of them.

The same is the case with wealth. It is very beloved in the eyes of the people desirous of the world, but it is very cheap in the eyes of the truthful. Those who are the men of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. They consider the departure of wealth from their possession to be more wholesome for their hearts than it remaining in their possession does. This is because their insight is fully open with honesty with Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى in all their situations and affairs. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى enable us to benefit from their condition, their words, their stories and their love. (Tartīb-ul-Madārik vol.3 p.98)

Five Incidents that bear Testimony to Extraordinary Devotion

[1] We present to you five incidents wherein the essence of devotion will be clarified to you and with which you will increase in goodness and understanding by believing Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى to be One through your deeds and your worship.

‘Amīr Ibn ‘Abd Qays and the Trunk of Jewels

When the Muslims captured Madā’in and gathered all the booty, a man came forward with a huge trunk that was filled with jewels and rare items. He gave it to the person in charge of the booty. Those who were around him said, “We have never seen anything like this.” They then asked him, “Did you take anything from it?” He replied, “By Allāh, had it not been for Allāh, I would not have brought it to you.” They realized that this person was unique. They asked him, “Who are you?” He replied, “By Allāh, I shall not tell you, otherwise you will praise me, nor will I tell others, otherwise they will praise me. Rather, I praise Allāh and will be pleased with His reward.”

They sent a person to follow him until he went to his friends and asked about him. They were told that he was ‘Amir Ibn ‘Abdul Qays. (Tārīkh-ul-Umam wal Mulūk vol.4 p.176)

Al-Qaysī Al-Hadramī was a great worshipper from the Tābi’īn. He was the first to be known for his piety in Basra. May Allāh be pleased with him.

The Man who Entered through a Hole and the Du'ā' of Maslamah that Allāh should join them in the Hereafter

Maslamah Ibn 'Abdul Malik (a Tābi'ī from Syria) laid siege to a fort. One of the walls had a hole. He called the people to enter it. However, no one entered. An ordinary person from the army came forward and entered it. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ enabled them to take control of the fort. Maslamah called, "Where is the person who went through the hole?" No one came forward. He called again and said, "I have instructed the guard to bring him to me no matter when he comes. I impress upon him that he must come."

'Some people went after him in order to catch him. However, they did not do it. They were not reproached, nor did they bother.'

A person came to the guard and said, "Permit me to meet the Amīr." He asked, "Are you the person who entered through the hole?" He said, "I shall inform you who he is." The guard went to Maslamah and told him about the person. Maslamah gave him permission. The man said, "The person who entered through the hole wants to put three conditions:

1. You do not record his name to send it to the Khalīfah
2. You do not order that anything be given to him

3. You do not ask him where he is from.

Maslamah replied, "He can have all these conditions." The man said, "I am that person."

After this, Maslamah would never perform Salāh without saying, "O Allāh, place me with that person who entered through the hole." ('Uyūn-ul-Akhbār vol.1 p.172)

Ibn 'Aun Al-Basrī Kills a Roman

'Abdullāh Ibn 'Aun Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a great leader, scholar and Hāfiz of Hadīth. He was a great worshipper and ascetic person; he was from the luminaries of Basra in terms of his virtues, memory, understanding and merit. He was born in 66A.H and passed away in 151 A.H.

Mufaddal Ibn Lāhiq said, "We were in the Roman lands when a Roman came forward and challenged us. A man went forward, accepted the challenge and killed him. This man then went away and mixed with the people to hide himself. I went behind him in order to find out who he was. He had a helmet on his head. He then removed his helmet in order to wipe his face. I saw that it was Ibn 'Aun." (Siyar A'lām An-Nubalā' vol.6 p.368)

Ya'qūb Ibn Ja'far Shoots Arrows at a Roman who Swore at Rasūlullāh ﷺ

As-Sūlī narrates, 'Al-'Alā narrated to us from Ya'qūb Ibn Sulaymān who said, "I attacked the city of 'Ammūriyyah together with Al-Mu'tasim (the 'Abbāsid King). The people were in need of water. Al-Mu'tasim provided reservoirs of water, covering an area of ten miles. Some of the water was sent upto the walls of the city. It is said that there were eighty thousand horses and eighty thousand black horses in his cavalry.

A person from the Roman army would climb the wall everyday and swear at Rasūlullāh ﷺ. This annoyed the Muslims greatly. The arrows could not reach him. Ya'qūb said, "I was a very good archer. I aimed at him and fired, the arrow struck his throat. He fell down and the Muslims said, "Allāhu-Akbar." Al-Mu'tasim was very happy by this and said, "Bring that person to me." I was brought in front of him. He asked, "Who are you?" I mentioned my lineage to him." On hearing this, he said, "All praise is for Allāh who made the reward of this arrow to a person from my family, the Banū 'Abbās."

He then said to me, "Sell the reward to me." I said, "O Amīr-ul-Mu'minīn, reward is not something that can be sold." He said, "I urge you to do this." He then gave me a hundred

thousand Dirhams. I said, "I am not selling my reward." He then offered me five hundred thousand Dirhams. I said, "I will not sell my reward for the entire world and whatever it contains. However, I will give you half the reward of this arrow. Allāh bears testimony to this." He said, "May Allāh reward you well. I am happy to accept this half."

He then asked, "Where did you learn archery?" I said, "In Basra, in my house." He said, "Sell me your house." I said, "On condition that it is pledged for those who wish to learn archery." He then gave me a hundred thousand Dirhams. (Risālah fī As-Sayd wa Ar-Rimāyah wa Al-Khayl)

How excellent is that king who tries his best to purchase the reward of that arrow. How excellent is that archer who does not sell the reward of his arrow for this world and whatever it contains.

'Reduce your criticism of them, may your fathers have no father, or fill the position which they had.'

Abū 'Amr Ibn Nujayd presents Wealth at Night

Abū 'Amr Ibn Nujayd was a great scholar, worshipper and Sufī Shaykh. His student, Al-Hākim, says, "He is the Shaykh, the worshipper, the ascetic, the Shaykh of Tasawwuf in his time. He is the most reliable of those who remain in Khurāsān in narrating Hadīth. He inherited a great amount

of wealth from his ancestors. He spent that wealth on the 'Ulamā' and the Sufis. He remained in the company of Sūfī Shaykhs like Shaykh Junayd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Abū 'Uthmān Al-Hiyarī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and many others.

Al-Hākim says that he heard Abū Sa'īd Ibn Abī Bakr Ibn Abī 'Uthmān saying that his grandfather, Abū 'Uthmān Al-Hiyarī asked for something for one of the border areas. The worshippers, ascetics, 'Ulamā' and Mujāhidīn stay in such buildings in order to push back the enemy if they tried to attack. He then delayed in providing financial help. He was greatly disturbed by this and began crying in front of the people.

Abū 'Amr Ibn Nujayd came to him in the dark of the night with a bag in which there were two thousand Dirhams. Abū 'Uthmān was happy upon seeing him and made Du'ā' for him.

When he sat in his gathering the next morning, he said, "O people, I hope for abundant reward for Abū 'Amr because he took the responsibility of an entire group in providing that money and it was such a great responsibility. May Allāh reward him well on my behalf.

Abū 'Amr stood up in front of all the people and said, "I brought all that money from my mother's wealth and she

Then, a person must desire Allāh by establishing Tauhīd and turning his full attention to Him and through Him in all obligatory and optional deeds.

The correct nature of conviction lies in three things:

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was not happy in giving it. You should give it back to me so that I can return it to her." Abū 'Uthmān instructed that it be returned. The people then dispersed.

When night fell, Abū 'Amr went to Abū 'Uthmān at the same time as the previous night and said, "Is it possible for you to take this money and use it in such a way that none but us knows about it?" Upon hearing this, Abū 'Uthmān started to cry. After this, he used to say, "I fear the worry and concern of Abū 'Amr. Abū 'Amr passed away in Naysabur in 360 A.H at the age of ninety three. May Allāh have mercy on him. (Tabaqāt Ash-Shāfi'iyyah Al-Kubrā vol.3 p.223)

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "He most probably did this in order to be included among the seven people who will be shaded by the shade of Allāh on that day when there will be no shade except the shade of Allāh.

One of the seven will be a person who gives charity and hides it, such that his left hand does not know what the right hand spent.

1. The heart experiences tranquility in placing trust in Allāh
2. Submitting to the orders of Allāh
3. Fear and dread of the knowledge of Allāh

Conviction has a beginning and a peak. The beginning of conviction is tranquility. The peak of conviction is believing in Allāh alone to be sufficient for one. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'Is Allāh not sufficient for His slave?' (Sūrah Zumar, 6)

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'O Nabī, Allāh is sufficient for you and for the believers that follow you.' (Sūrah Anfāl, 64)

The word Al-Hasb refers to a being that is sufficient. The word Al-Muktafī refers to a person who is pleased with whatever Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ has decreed.

When we said, 'the peak of conviction', we were referring to the qualities that are found in a person regarding his īmān and not the peak of conviction regarding knowledge. This is because this is something that no one from the creation of Allāh can reach.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ said, "No one will ever fathom the true nature of Allāh." The Sahābah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ said, "O Rasūl of Allāh, we have heard that 'Isā عَلَيْهِٱلسَّلَامُ used to walk on water?"

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, "Had he increased in his conviction and fear, he would have walked in the air."[1]

Fear of Allāh cannot be acquired except after conviction. Have you ever seen a person fearing something which he is not convinced about?

Fear is in three things:

1. The fear of īmān. The sign of this is that a person exerts all his efforts in abstaining from acts of sin.[2] This is the fear that Murīds have.
2. The fear of being snatched. The sign of this is humility, fear and dread. This is the fear which the 'Ulamā' have of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.
3. The fear of missing. The sign of this is exerting all efforts in seeking the pleasure of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى by the presence of awe and respect for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. This is the fear that the Siddīqīn have.

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[1] This is a fabricated report. It is also mentioned in Ihyā' vol.12 p.94

[2] In other words, staying away from all types of sin. The Tābi'ī, Muhammad Ibn Wāsi' Al-Basrī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said, "If sins had an odour, you would not have been able to come near me on account of the stink of my odour." (Hilyah vol.2 p.349)

There is a fourth stage of fear which Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ reserved for the angels and Ambiyā'. This is the fear of respect. In other words, although they are safe and secure about their selves because of the safety guaranteed for them, their fear is their worship of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ out of respect and honour for Him.

Love is in three things. A person cannot be considered to be a true lover of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ without them:

1. Love for the believers for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ.[1] The signs of this love is protecting them from harm and causing benefit to them in accordance to the Sharī'ah of Muhammad صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ.
2. Love for Muhammad صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ for the sake of Allāh.[2] The sign of this love is following the Sunnah.[1] Allāh

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[1] The most beautiful explanation of this love for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ is the statement of the Tābi'ī, Masrūq Ibn Al-Ajdā' رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ. Someone said to him, "I certainly love you for the sake of Allāh." Masrūq رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ said, "You certainly love Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. Therefore, you love the one who loves Allāh." (Al-'Ilal wa Ma'rifah Ar-Rijāl vol.1 p.73)

[2] In other words, you must love Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ because Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ commanded you to do so.

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[1] Following and imitating Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ means doing all this in his actions, his abstaining from doing something and his words. Following him in his actions means doing as he did because it is he who did that. Following him in abstaining from doing something because it is he who abstained from it. Following him in his words means emulating his statements in the manner that is demanded by him. If you do or leave out because he did or he left out, then this is mawāfaqah and not mutāba'ah. Muwāfaqah is more encompassing than emulating. This is because muwāfaqah cannot be without emulating. (Al-Kaukab Al-Munīr Sharh Mukhtasar At-Tahrīr vol.2 p.196)

Following the Sunnah has a number of forms. Among them is that you spend of yourself or your wealth in order to follow the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ. If you have to bear tiredness and difficulty in spending of yourself, or if you have to spend a lot of money in this, you have actually gained much more that what you have spent for you have acquired the Sunnah.

Read the following incident so that you can see one of the forms of spending which you probably did not even think about. This is due to a Sunnah towards which Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ invited.

سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى says, 'Say, if you love Allāh, then follow me, Allāh will love you.' (Sūrah Al-'Imrān, 31)

3. Love for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى in giving preference to obedience over disobedience. There is a saying that remembering the bounties and favours causes love for that person.[1]

'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abdur Rahmān Ibn Abī Husayn said, "Uthmān Ibn 'Affān رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ bought an orchard from a person. He discussed with him the price of the orchard and they agreed. 'Uthmān رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ then said, "Give me your hand."

When the seller saw the hand of 'Uthmān رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ, he said, "By Allāh, I will not sell it to you until you give me ten thousand Dirhams more." 'Uthmān رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ turned to 'Abdur Rahmān Ibn 'Auf رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ and said, "I heard Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ saying, 'Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى will enter into Jannah a person who is forbearing, whether he is a seller, a buyer, a person meting out justice or a person seeking justice." 'Uthmān رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ then said to the seller, "Here, take these ten thousand Dirhams so that I may be eligible for these words which I heard from Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ." (Al-Matālib Al-'Aliyah vol.1 p.376)

May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى be pleased with 'Uthmān رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ and all those who follow him until the Day of Qiyāmah.

Ten Causes that attract the Love of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى

[1] 'Allāmah Firozābādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that there are ten causes that attract the love of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. They are:

1. Recitation of the Qur'ān with reflection, understanding its meaning, and grasping the intentof Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى
2. Gaining closeness to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى by optional Salāh after the obligatory Salāh. This is because this would convey a person to the level of becoming the beloved of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى after gaining His love.
3. Constant remembrance of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى in every condition with the tongue and heart. Through deeds and under all circumstances. The lover will gain that amount of love according to the amount of his remembrance of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى.
4. Giving preference to those things that are loved by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى over one's personal liking and inclination at the time when one is overtaken by desire.
5. The heart pondering over the names and quailities of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى and witnessing all this. Furthermore, it must traverse the gardens of this recognition and

fundamental concepts. The person who recognizes Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى through His names, attributes, and actions will definitely love Him.

6. Witnessing and looking at His kindness, His benevolence, His outer and inner bounties.
7. This is the best of all: the heart submitting itself totally in front of Him.
8. Remaining in solitude with Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى at the time of His manifestation – the time before dawn – in order to converse with Him, to recite Him book, to stand in front of Him with body and heart. Then, ending this with seeking forgiveness and repentance.
9. Sitting in the company of those who are the true lovers of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى, picking up the fruits of their pure words. The lover should not speak unless there is some real advantage in doing so and he knows that this speaking will improve his condition.
10. Remaining far away from every cause that would come as a barrier between the heart and Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى.

It is through these causes that the lovers of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى reached the levels of love for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى. (Basā'ir Dhawī At-Tamyīz vol.2 p.421)

Love has a beginning, a middle point and a peak. The first is love for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ through His favours and bounties.

Sayyidunā Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "The hearts are naturally created to love those who are kind to them. Who is better than Allāh in fulfilling promises, in showing mercy, in showing kindness, and in overlooking, than Allāh, the forbearing, the kind?"

The middle point of love is carrying out the orders of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ and abstaining from His prohibitions in such a way that He does not find you missing in what He ordered you to do, and He does not find you doing what you were prohibited to do. Once disobedience takes place, acknowledgement of Allāh's orders will disappear and turning away from His prohibitions will disappear in a short while.

The peak of love is love for Allāh because of the intrinsic right of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. 'Alī Ibn Fudayl رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ is loved because it is He who is Allāh."

A person said to Tā'ūs, "Give me advice." He said, "I advise you to love Allāh so intensely that you do not love anything else more than Him. You must fear Allāh so much that you do not fear anything more than Him. You should have hope in Allāh in such a way that the hope comes as a barrier between you and that fear. You must like for people what you like for yourself. You can now leave for I have combined

for you the knowledge of the Taurāt, the Injīl, the Zabūr and the Qur'ān."

You must know that showing respect and honour with modesty is like the position of the head in the body. None can do without the other. When a person is ashamed of his Rabb, he will respect and honour Him. The essence of modesty is constant consciousness of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ.[1]

Two Examples of Showing Honour for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ

[1] Sufyān Thaurī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "People used to say that Qays Ibn Muslim never raised his head towards the sky since such and such time out of respect for Allāh."

The Tābi'ī, Sa'īd Ibn Musayyib رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "For the last thirty years, the Muezzin did not call the Azān without my already being in the Masjid."

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'This is the peak of consciousness of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ because it is the duty of the slave to be in front of his master before the latter can call for him, not that he only comes after the master calls for him.

Salāh is waited upon and does not wait for anyone

One of the most beautiful incidents in this regard is that which happened between one of the Imāms of a Masjid in Egypt and the judge of Egypt, ‘Alī Ibn Husayn Ibn Harb Ash-Shāfi’ī. He was a great scholar of Hadīth. He also used to be called Ibn Harbawayh and had the title of Abū ‘Ubayd. He was born in 212 A.H and passed away in 319 A.H in Baghdad. May Allāh have mercy on him.

Ibn Zūlāq said, ‘When Abū ‘Ubayd first came to Egypt, he lived in the house of Ismā’īl Ibn Ishāq near the Ibn ‘Amrūs Masjid. He then shifted to Dar Al-Madā’inī. When he used to hear the Azān, he would go for Salāh. At times, he would find that the Imām had already performed the Salāh or performed part of the Salāh before he could come. Therefore, he sent a message to the Imām to wait for him.

After he sent several messages to the Imām, the Imām said, “Salāh is waited upon and does not wait for anyone.” When hearing this, the judge made inquiries about this Imām and found that the people spoke highly of him. Therefore, he made this Imām one of his confidants and close friends.” (Al-Wulāt wa Al-Qudāt li Misr p.526)

Murāqabah is in three things:

1. Murāqabah of Allāh in obedience to Him through doing good deeds
2. Murāqabah of Allāh with regard to acts of sin by abstaining from acts of sin
3. Murāqabah of Allāh through pondering and thinking.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Worship Allāh as though you can see Him. If you are unable to imagine seeing Him, then know that He is watching you."

A person to be constantly conscious of Allāh is tiresome to the body in comparison to standing in Salāh all night long, keeping fast the entire day and spending wealth in the path of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

It is narrated about Sayyidunā 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that he used to say, 'Allāh has a receptacle in the world.[1] The hearts are from among His receptacles in the world.'

How true these words are. May Allāh shower His mercy on that Imām.

[1] Ibn Al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said, "There are receptacles that are filled with good. There are receptacles that are filled with evil. Like someone from the past said, "The hearts of the

Therefore, He only accepts those that are pure, firm and soft. (Kitāb-uz-Zuhd p.384)

The meaning of this is that the purity of the heart for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى is through following His commands and prohibitions, witnessing truthfulness and compassion. The purity of the heart for Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ is by accepting all that he came with, be it his words, actions or intentions. The purity of the heart for the believers is through staying away from causing them harm and through causing them benefit.

As for the word 'firm', it means that the heart is firm in establishing the limits for the sake of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى, commanding good and forbidding evil.

As for the word 'soft', it sould be in two ways. Softness through crying in front of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى and softness through showing kindness.[1]

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pious boil with good, whilst the hearts of the sinners boil with evil." (Miftāh Dār-us-Sa'ādah p.135)

[1] In other words, through the softness of the heart and kindness and mercy. Kindness is softer than mercy. Softness through crying results in fear of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى and pondering over His greatness and might.

Yazīd Ibn Marthad was a pious Tābi'ī who used to cry in abundance. His student, 'Abdur Rahmān Ibn Yazīd Ibn Jābir, asked him, "Why is it that I see your eyes tearing all the time?" He asked, "What is the point of your question?" I said, "Perhaps Allāh will enable me to benefit from this." He said, "O my son, Allāh warned me that if were to disobey Him, He will imprison me in the fire of Jahannam. By Allāh, if He only had to warn me that He would imprison me in a bathroom, it would have been most appropriate for me that my eyes never dry."

May Allāh be pleased with him and delight his eyes with His pleasure.

All inspiration to do good is from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَى alone. He is sufficient for us and He is the best protector.

This servant, in need of Allāh, 'Abdul Fattāh Ibn Muhammad Abū Ghuddah, may Allāh forgive him and his parents, says, "I compelted my efforts on this book and wrote a commentary to it for the first time on 1 Jumad-al-Ulā 1384 A.H in Aleppo.

I then made many additions to the commentary. I took into consideration what our young men and women of today will require in terms of guidance and instruction for the soul and to be able to live in this corrupt society, irrespective of whether they are in a Muslim country or in a non-Muslim

country, away from home when they are forced to travel to foreign countries.

May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ save us and them from every evil and may he inspire us towards good and piety.

It is from Allāh that I seek a noble reward. From those who benefit from this book, I seek their Du'ā' and good thoughts. My ability to do is from Allāh alone, in Him I place my trust and to Him I turn.

I completed the commentary to this book a second time on 5 Jumad-al-Ulā 1391 in Beirut. All praise is for Allāh, Rabb of the worlds.

I completed the commentary to this book a third time, the eighth edition of this book, with much more additions to it on Thursday, 12 Safar 1412 in Riyadh.

I hope for the pleasure and acceptance of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, more benefit from this book, and request the Du'ā' and mercies of those who benefit from it.

Allāh rewards the doers of good. All praise is due to Allāh, the Rabb of the worlds.

Request

Finally, this weak one, Muhammad Qmr-uz-Zamān Ilahābādī says that the work on Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn has been completed. We have named in Nasīhat-ul-Muslimīn. All praise is for Allāh, by Whose grace good deeds are completed.

May Allāh grant the ability to all the Muslims to read and listen to this book. By reading these books with a true heart, enthusiasm for the path of Sulūk is created. In fact, 'Allāmah Sha'rānī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, "Those who studied such books and the enthusiasm for the path of Allāh is not created in them, then they are like dead."

Therefore, we request all the Muslims to study this book with a clear and open mind and heart. Insha Allāh, like the original, it will be full of blessings.

Finally, I make Du'ā' to Allāh, that may He reward all those who helped, especially those who aided in bringing out this work for all in published form. Maulānā Iqbāl Tankārwī, Maulānā Fadl Mahmūd Falāhī gave their beneficial counsel. Moreover, Maulānā Abdullāh Qāsimī made great effort to publish it in a beautiful form. May Allāh let this be of benefit and a means of our salvation. Āmīn

وصلى الله على النبي الامي وعلى آله وصحبه واوليائه اجمعين الى يوم الدين برحمتك يا ارحم الراحمين

Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān Ilāhabādī

End Notes

In this work, there were some footnotes that were deep in terms of knowledge. These notes would have carried on and become lengthy. This would have taken the reader far away from the discussion at hand. Therefore, I felt it best to add these notes at the end of the book.

Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used the word Qadīm as part of the describing qualities of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. The word Qadīm is not part of the names of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. This is only a word used by the early day scholars for clarification. It is close in meaning to the word Al-Awwal. Therefore, according to the terminology of the Arabs, it is used to show one thing coming before another. In addition, something old is referred to as Qadīm. Something new is called Hadīth.

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'until it returns to its previous condition'. For purposes of explanation, the 'Ulamā' use this word in abundance. A group of scholars disliked the word Qadīm to be used for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. This is because it is not established in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. The word in the Qur'ān and Sunnah is Al-Awwal.

In the commentary of Sahih Muslim, there is a Du'ā' narrated that should be read before sleeping. Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates, 'O Allāh, You are Al-Awwal…'

In short, it is established that Al-Qadīm is not part of the Asmā'-ul-Husnā.

In the beginning, Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote, 'fulfilling the right of the bounty', this type of praise and this meaning is not established in the Sunnah. In fact, whatever is proven from it is the opposite. Therefore, it is not appropriate to say this.

This Du'ā' is traced back to Abū Nasr from Muhammad Ibn Nadr Al-Hārithī. He says, 'Adam عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ said, 'O my Rabb, You have made me busy in earning with my hands. Teach me a Du'ā' that has Tasbīh and Hamd.' Allāh sent revelation to him, 'O Adam, when you awake in the morning, then recite thrice in the morning and then in the evening the following, (الحمد لله رب العالمين حمدا يوافي نعمه ويكافئ مزيده). This will be Hamd and Tasbīh. This is mentioned in Al-Adhkār of Nawawī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. However, he did not mention the source.

This is a Munqati' chain and a very weak report. The narrator is from the Tab'-ut-Tābi'īn, Muhammad Ibn Nadr. So, there are a few stages between him and Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Abū Nu'aym says in Hilyah, 'He was among the greatest worshippers in Kufa. However, he was an expert in Hadīth narration. People would record his advises. Ibn As-Salāh also said that he was not a scholar of Hadīth.

Abū Nu'aym mentioned that he reported Isrā'īlī narrations. Therefore, Allāh knows best where he got the narration about Adam عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ from. Apparently, it is an Isrā'īlī narration.

This was in terms of the report and chain of narration. Anyway, in terms of the meaning, it is also not correct. This is because it goes against reality. This is because the praise of a human being can never reach the limit of the bounties of Allāh. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, and he knew the position of Allāh the most, 'I cannot praise you as You ought to be praised.' (Muslim)

In Mirqāt, Mullā 'Alī Qārī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes about this narration, 'I cannot praise you no matter how much effort I make. This is because there is no moment except that Your bounties are falling upon me. If I want to count these moments, I will be unable. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ says, 'If you count a bounty of Allāh, you will not be able to encompass them.'

From this, it is clear that it is not permitted to use the words of praise for Allāh that were used, as there is debate about its authenticity. There is also a problem with the meaning. Therefore, it is not appropriate to use it.

After writing these lines, I saw that Ibn Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote in Uddah As-Sābirīn wa Dhakhīra Ash-Shākirīn, 'anyway, some scholars say that if someone took an oath that he will praise Allāh in the most virtuous way, then to fulfil his oath,

he should say (الحمد لله رب العالمين حمدا يوافي نعمه ويكافئ مزيده). This is not a Hadīth from Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ, nor is it narrated from a Sahābī. It is an Isrā'īlī report. No person can praise Allāh completely for a bounty. Therefore, what question is there of all His bounties? The action of a person cannot replace praise for Allāh.

'Allāmah Safārīnī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ has written in Ghidhā-ul-Albāb vol.1 p.18, 'Ibn Qayyim was asked about the most virtuous form of Hamd and he said these words of Abū Nasr, ascribing them to Adam عَلَيۡهِٱلسَّلَامُ. How much time there is between Abū Nasr and Adam عَلَيۡهِٱلسَّلَامُ, none but Allāh knows. If Abū Nasr could not link it to Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ, how could he link it to Adam عَلَيۡهِٱلسَّلَامُ?

Hafiz Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ in Talkhīs Al-Habīr vol.4 p.171 said that Nawawī رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ said that there is no reliable proof for this ruling. The report is Mu'dal.

However, he adopted another method in his work Al-Ifsāh bi Takmīl An-Nukat 'alā Ibn As-Salāh and said that the Shawāfi' say that it is established.

In Majmū'a Al-Fatāwā, Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ said, "It is impossible regarding Allāh سُبۡحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ that the creation cannot go extra in the bounties of Allāh. This is why Rasūlullāh صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيۡهِوَسَلَّمَ would read when lifting the food cloth, (الحمد لله حمدا كثيرا طيبا مباركا فيه غير مكفي ولا مكفور ولا مودع ولا مستغنى عنه ربنا). (Bukhārī)

Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Al-Fatāwā Al-Kubrā said that he was asked about the words (الحمد لله مجازيا مكافيا), if a person can recite such type of unclear words. He was also asked about the position of the words in terms of syntax.

Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said that this type of Hamd is not narrated from such people whose words can be taken as authoritative. However, it is possible that the speaker will take the correct meaning.

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that the words of praise under discussion has nothing to do with the debated form. I have mentioned this discussion so that people will know that this form is not narrated.

Therefore, if these words are used by senior scholars, one should not be mistaken if you find out that it is not proven and there is a problem with the meaning. This is because when found in the speech of some scholars, it is proof that infallibility is specific with the Ambiyā'.

These words come in the beginning of the book of Ibn Abī Hātim, Taqdimah Al-Jarh wat-Ta'dīl. It is also in Idāh Al-Ishkāl fir Ruwāt. This is the book of Hāfiz 'Abdul Ghanī Al-Misrī. It is also mentioned in Iqāmat-ud-Dalīl 'alā Ibtāl At-Tahlīl of Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. If these words are mentioned by them, it is not proof that it is permissible. And Allāh knows best.

The explanation of loud Dhikr with a group will now be explained.

The Permitted Nature of Loud Dhikr, Alone and in a Group

Some scholars say that loud Dhikr, whether alone or in a group, is not permissible. However, the truth is that it is permissible. This is explained by ‘Allāmah ‘Abdul Hayy Lucknowi رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Sabāhat-ul-Fikr fil Jahr bidh Dhikr. In this book, he mentioned the proofs of those who forbid it, and he mentioned the replies to it. He then mentioned the proofs of those who permit it. He stated about forty-eight proofs. In fact, some proofs show that it is Mustahab, as he indicated. He also mentioned the places where loud Dhikr is required, or it is Makrūh. He mentioned the etiquettes and conditions as not found in other works.

This book has been published a number of times in India. I got the work published with research notes in Beirut. You can study it there.

Hāfiz Suyūtī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ also wrote a work on this subject. He called it Natījat-ul-Fikr fī Al-Jahr bidh Dhikr.

I felt it appropriate to mention some of the proofs written by ‘Allāmah Lucknowī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ here. I have added words for complete benefit in between. Imām Lucknowī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes,

'Among those who permitted it is Shaykh Abdul Haq Dehlawī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He wrote Tausīl Al-Murīd ilā Al-Murād bi Bayān Ahkām Al-Ahzāb wal Awrād. This book is in Persian. I mention the words here in Arabic. 'It is permissible to recite the Qur'ān and make Dhikr in gatherings in the Masjid. This is because of the Hadīth, 'He who remembers Me in a gathering, I shall remember him in a better gathering'. In Sahīh Bukhārī, Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا says that the people returning from Salāh we came to know in the time of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ by the loud Dhikr.

It is also established that the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ used to recite the fourth Kalimah in a loud voice. This is made specific with Fajr and Maghrib in some narrations.

In Muslim, Sayyidunā Mu'āwiyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote to Sayyidunā Mughīrah Ibn Shu'bah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, 'Write that which you heard from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.' He wrote that when Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ completed Salāh, he heard him reciting the words 'lā ilāha illā Allāh…'

It is also proven in many placed from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that he recited the Dhikr and Du'ā' aloud. The pious predecessors practised on it. In Bukhārī, Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ says that when the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ were digging the trench, they had stones tied to their stomachs. When Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saw them, he said, 'O Allāh, there is no life, but the life of the hereafter, so forgive the Ansār and the

Muhājirīn.' In reply, the Sahābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ would say, 'We are the ones who pledged allegiance to Muhammad, upon Jihād, as long as we live.'

In short, there is no debate about mentioning these words aloud in certain places. The only debate is that in a certain specific incident, if something is proven, is there permission on a general scale, or does it prove its permissibility?

The opposition say that it could be that in these places, there was a special benefit that is not in other places. Alternatively, they can say that possibly Dhikr in a gathering and loud Dhikr is permitted, but not so with individual Dhikr. Therefore, it is necessary that the proofs be mentioned that point to the permissibility of the general Dhikr. In shirt, individual Dhikr is proven from the Hadīth discussing the Dhikr in a gathering. It is the Marfū' narration of Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ where it describes the angels that go out and seek the gatherings of Dhikr.

As for gathering for Du'ā; it is proven in the narration of Hākim. Hākim said that it is Marfū' according to the condition of Muslim. 'No group gathers and some of them make Du'ā' and some say āmīn, except that Allāh will accept their Du'ā'.

For Tilāwat in a gathering, there is a narration, 'a nation does not gather in one of the houses of Allāh, reading the Qur'ān and learning and teaching, except that the angels

surround them.' Nawawī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and others said that it is Sahīh. It is mentioned in Muslim.

From here, the 'Ulamā' have proven the permissibility of having gatherings of Dhikr in the Masājid.

However, Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and his students have all mentioned that it is Makrūh. This is because the pious predecessors did not practice it. Moreover, he could have adopted this view in order to stop innovation so that it does not necessitate adding to Dīn. This has happened in our time, that which he feared.

Shaykh 'Abdul Haq Dehlawī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentioned in his commentary on Mishkāt that when Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ made Salām after Witr, he recited thrice, 'Subhānal Malik Al-Quddūs', the third time aloud. This Hadīth is proof for the permissibility of loud Dhikr. It is permitted to make loud Dhikr, but soft is better.

In his commentary, Mullā 'Alī Al-Qārī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that this points out to the permissibility of loud Dhikr. In fact, we learn that it is Mustahab. This is when the objective is to save one's self from ostentation and to show Dīn, or to teach the listeners. In addition, to wake them from their negligence. One should make the intention that this sound will cause blessings to reach the animals and plants too. Every creation will testify in favour of the person. Some

Mashāyikh prefer soft Dhikr because it is far from ostentation. Anyway, all this is linked to intention.

Biography of the Author

Name, Lineage, Birth, Death

Hārith Ibn Asad Muhāsibī, Abū ‘Abdullāh. He was born in Basrah and lived in Baghdad. He was well known in his time for knowledge and piety. Due to an abundance of taking himself to account, he was called Muhāsibī. The exact time of his birth is not known. However, we can gauge it to be around 165 A.H. He passed away in 243 A.H in Baghdad. May Allāh have mercy on him.

Ibn Bashkwāl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote a separate book in the life and works of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. This is mentioned by Sakhāwī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Al-Jawāhir wad Durar fī Tarjumah Shaykh-ul-Islām Ibn Hajar.

Shuyūkh in Hadīth

He narrated Hadīth from Yazīd Ibn Hārūn and the Hadīth scholars of his class. Besides this, it is also mentioned that he learnt Hadīth from Imām Shāfi’ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ’s students in Hadīth were Abul ‘Abbās Ibn Masrūq, Ahmad Ibn Hasan Ibn ‘Abdul Jabbār and Junayd Baghdadī.

Abstinence, Knowledge, Works

Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was an abstinent worshipper, jurist, lecturer and Muhaddith. He had a sweet tongue and had a powerful speech. When he spoke on encouraging or admonishing, it seemed as though what he spoke about was before him and he was directly feeling it. When he ended, then the strength of proofs would cause the listener to be convinced. Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ would always speak good and was a well-wisher.

Whatever he wrote, he would warn with truth and conviction. When he spoke, the people would generally cry. When he advised, then he would warn of Jahannam and its terrors. Sometimes, he would advise like a compassionate father would to his children.

All the time of Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ would be spent in goodness: whether it was worship, reminding, writing and compiling. There was no time of his that passed in which he did not do any good work, upon which he had hope of reward. Based on this, he wrote many books. It is mentioned by Tāj-ud-Dīn Ibn As-Subkī that some Shawāfi' scholars said that he wrote about two hundred books. Most of them were on Tasawwuf. A number of works he wrote in refutation of the Mu'tazilah, Rawāfid and Qadariyyah. He also wrote on Fiqh. Despite writing many books, his works were very

beneficial, especially the books in Tasawwuf and spirituality. They became the basis for books later on, even Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ took benefit from them.

Praise of Muhāsibī from the seniors

Our teacher, Muhammad Zāhid Al-Kautharī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said that Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had a great effect on Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, in Ihyā', Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had used Ar-Ri'āyah of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ to a significant extent.

'Allāmah Munāwī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Al-Kaukab Ad-Durriyyah fī Tarājim As-Sāddah As-Sūfiyyah wrote that 'Allāmah Abū Mansūr Baghdadī said that he was the Imām of the Muslims in Fiqh, Tasawwuf, Hadīth and 'Ilm Kalām.

Other scholars said that Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote about two hundred books and these books became a basis and source for later works.

Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Ihyā' wrote that in the knowledge of Mu'āmalāt, Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was the greatest scholar of the Ummah. Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ took many things verbatim from Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in the topics of illnesses of the soul, dangers in worship and so on.

Imām Shātbī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Al-I'tisām says that Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was amongst the senior Sūfīs and a person to be followed.

Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Nukat says that Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was amongst the Imāms of Hadīth and Fiqh.

Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ is amongst the Imāms of Usūl-ul-Fiqh. Some of the 'Ulamā' mention views form him in the principles of Fiqh.

His Method in Writing on the Conditions of the Soul

Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had a unique method in writing on the different sciences and compiling his works. Al-Hilyah of Abū Nu'aym says that Junayd Baghdadī said that Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ would go to his house and tell him to accompany him in the outlying areas. He would say, "You want to take me out of my house, safety and take me to different difficulties?" He replied, "Come with me, do not fear." Subsequently, I went with him, and as the path was empty, we did not see anything we disliked. When I reached the place where he used to sit, he said, "Ask whatever you want to." I said, "I have no question to ask you." He would then say, "Ask what is in your heart." Questions would come to me from all sides and I would ask. He would immediately give the answers. After this, he would give it the form of a book.

If you want to gauge the status of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Fiqh, then when making Tafsīr of the verse, 'do not backbite about

one another', study Tafsīr Qurtubī. This section is a proof of the Fiqh, knowledge and understanding of the Sharī'ah of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

Criticism of some Muhaddithīn of his Works

Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ started writing works on the conditions of the soul and reformation of character at a very early stage, during the end of the second Hijri century. It was a time when long journeys would be undertaken for Hadīth, and transmitting it. Every person who was not engaged in this field was looked at with a stern eye, whether it was a Faqīh, lecturer or scholar of kalām.

It is for this reason that you will find that in Mīzān-ul-I'tidāl, Imām Dhahabī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ narrated the harsh words of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ upon Hishām Dimashqī. However, together with this, he wrote that the scholars of the time spoke about the others in accordance to their view and Ijtihād. In addition, there is no person except for Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ whose every word and deed can accepted as is.

Based on this, Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had to also face criticism from some of the contemporary scholars. According to the Muhaddithīn, knowledge only entailed transmission of Hadīth, text and chain of it, not discussion and understanding it. They felt that to use one's opinion to

understand the Hadīth was going against the Hadīth. Subsequently, when they came to know that a certain scholar had adopted Ijtihād in a certain matter, or a scholar of kalām had said something about the qualities of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ, or a lecturer had delved into the conditions of the soul and mentioned his opinion, then his self-honour would come to the fore. He would criticize the person and he felt it appropriate to mention something about him. Incidents of this nature can be found in great abundance in the books of Jarh and Ta'dīl.

Hāfiz Dhahābī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Mīzān-ul-I'tidāl vol.1 p.199 that Muhāsibī was a person who recognized Allāh, he was an author and truthful. However, the Muhaddithīn had criticized some of his works in Tasawwuf.

Therefore, there is nothing surprising if Imām Abū Zur'ah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ criticized some of the works of Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, when considering the environment at the time. Subsequently, Khatīb Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Tārīkh Baghdad vol.8 p.215 writes with a chain of transmission until Sa'īd Ibn 'Amr that Barda'ī explained, 'I went to Imām Abū Zur'ah Rāzī. He was asked about Hārith Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and his books. He addressed the questioner and said that he stays away from his books, as they have innovations and deviations. He also told him to hold onto narrating Ahādīth as works in that field has enough provision to remain independent.

When he was told that these books have lessons and advice, then he said that for the person that there is no lesson in the book of Allāh, there will be no lessons for him in these books also. Have you heard Imām Mālik, Sufyān Thaurī, Auzā'ī and other senior scholars writing about such topics? These Sūfīs are opposition for the Muhaddithīn. Sometimes they say what Muhāsibī explained, sometimes what 'Abdur-Rahīm Daybulī said, sometimes from Hātim Asamm and Shaqīq Balkhī. After this, he said, "These people are heading towards innovation the quickest."

Types of Innovation according to Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

In Fath-ul-Bārī (vol.13 p.212), Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentioned the Hadīth of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, 'Indeed the best speech is the book of Allāh, the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad, the worst of matters are the innovated one and what you have been promised will come.'

He then writes, 'Imām Shāfi'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said that innovation is of two types.

1. Mahmūdah

2. Madhmūmah

That which is in accordance to the Sunnah will be Mahmūdah and that which conflicts with the Sunnah will be Madhmūmah.

In Manāqib Shāfi'ī vol.1 p.469, Bayhaqī mentioned that an innovation that comes about in Dīn is of two types:

1. Something new that is against the Qur'ān, Sunnah, statement of a Sahābī or Ijmā'. This will be deviation.

2. Something good has been made, it does not contradict any of the above, so it will not be Madhmūm.

In later times, whatever was created, a few examples will be mentioned here:

1. Compilation of Hadīth

2. Tafsīr of the Qur'ān

3. Compilation of Fiqhī rulings based only on Ijtihād

4. Compilation of matters related to the deeds of the heart

Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and Sayyidunā Abū Mūsā Ash'arī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had criticized the compilation of Hadīth, whereas mos had given permission.

A number of Tābi'īn like Sha'bī had criticized the Tafsīr of the Qur'ān.

A small group of scholars and Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had criticized compilation of Fiqhī rulings that were solely based on opinion or Qiyās.

Similarly, Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had also severely admonished with regard to compiling works related to the matters of the heart.

Another Reason for Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Abū Zur'ah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ prohibiting the Method of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

Hāfiz Ibn Rajab Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had forbade the ways of Hārith Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ on behalf of Imām Abū Zur'ah Rāzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. Besides the reason explained above, there is another one. In his book Jāmi' Al-'Ulūm wal Hikam, he mentioned the Hadīth, 'Ask your heart, even if the Muftīn issue you with a fatwā', and then said, 'Imām Ahmad and others have criticized the works that delve into the matters of the heart, like those of the Sūfīs, based on the premise that their words have no Shar'ī proof and it is only linked with Qiyās and enthusiasm. Similarly, he also criticized matters pertaining to the rulings of Halāl and Harām when they have no Shar'ī proof.

'Allāmah Ibn Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Manāqib Imām Ahmad has mentioned from Muhaddith Ishāq Ibn Hayyah A'mash that

he explained, 'I heard Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ speaking about Wasāwis and thoughts when questioned about it saying, 'The Sahābah and Tābi'īn did not speak about this.' Then he says, 'Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ on account of severe criticism of innovation and in strict adherence to the Sunnah, he also spoke harshly against some pious people, if anything against the Sunnah happened from them. Therefore, the words of Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ should be based upon well-wishing for the sake of Dīn.'

Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ only forbade Hārith Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ for this reason and he informed the people that he had adopted some of the views of Ibn Kallāb Basrī. Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ did not stop Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ because of Sulūk, good character, and reformation. This is because this is something that the pious 'Ulamā' used to do and they used to call to it by means of their statements, deeds, and books.

In Majmū'a Fatāwā Ibn Taymiyyah vol.12 p.368, it is mentioned, 'During the final days of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Kallāb Basrī became famous. He had authored a number of books against the Jahamiyyah and Mu'tazilah. These works were related to debate about the qualities of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. The method was close to that of the Muhaddithīn and the ways of the Ahl-us-Sunnah wal Jamā'ah. However, there was some innovation found. This is because Ibn Kallāb Basrī used to prove that the qualities of

Allāh are established with the being of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. However, matters of choice were not established with His being. Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ followed Ibn Kallāb in this.

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and other Imāms of the Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah and other senior scholars used to advise people to stay away from this principle of Ibn Kallāb. This is the reason why Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ forbade his followers from Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

Praise of Muhāsibī by Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentioned good words about Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and praised him. In Al-Fatwā Al-Hamawiyyah p.266, he spoke about Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, and said, 'Imām Abū 'Abdullāh Hārith Ibn Asad Ibn Ismā'īl Muhāsibī has written in Fahm-ul-Qur'ān', then he quoted more than four pages of texts from he book showing honour and like for the work.

Similarly, the Shaykh of Junayd Baghdadī, Sirrī Saqatī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, praised Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in terms of his knowledge, etiquette and Sulūk. Junayd Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had emphasized that this should be taken from Muhāsibī and he forbade taking from him what he wrote against the Mutakallimīn.

Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Ihyā' vol.1 p.38 writes, 'Junayd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, 'One day my Shaykh, Sirrī Saqatī asked, 'After I pass away, who will you go to?' I said, 'Shaykh Muhāsibī.' He said,

'Very good. Take benefit from his knowledge. However, do not take anything from regarding refutation of the Mutakallimīn.'

Third Reason for Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ Criticising Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

Ibn Rajab Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes in Manāqib Imām Ahmad that the innovations that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ criticized, one of them is that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ spoke without sound. Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ severely criticized this and said that the one who says this is an innovator.

It is said that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ cut off ties from Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ only because of this.

Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes about the point that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ told the people to stay away from Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ because of this. However, the scholars write that Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had retracted from his view and repented. He became famous in knowledge, virtue and abstinence.

If this is correct, then it means that whatever ill feeling there was between Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, it was on account of negating that which was not negated in the Sharī'ah.

The Cause was him going deep into Kalām

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that from this detail we learn that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had criticized Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ for going into matters of Kalām. This is supported by the following:

1. In Tārīkh Baghdad (vol.8 p.214), Khatīb Baghdadī has written, 'Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ disliked debating and discussing the views and works of Muhāsibī in the knowledge of Kalām and he stopped the people from the same.'

In that time, the matter of Ilm Kalām was a major one. Every great scholar had to take part in it. Shaykh Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was an outstanding scholar of the time. Therefore, he took part in it too. However, he was not amongst the Imāms of Kalām but he was counted amongst the philosophers and Mutakallimīn. Therefore, if he refuted the doubts of the Mu'tazilah and their objections, and broke it, what was the problem?

2. Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Ihyā' has written from the senior pious predecessors about Ilm Kalām, 'Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that the scholar who goes deep into Kalām will not find success. Subsequently, whoever went deep into Ilm Kalām, he found doubt in his heart.

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ severely criticised Ilm Kalām to such an extent that he cut off ties from Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ because he went into Ilm Kalām and refuting the people of innovation, despite him having a very high level of taqwā, abstinence and piety. He said to Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, 'May you be destroyed. Is it not the case that you first mention the innovation and then refute it? By means of your books, are you not making the people tired of studying the innovation and doubts? This book calls the people to voice their opinion and debate.'

3. 'Allāmah Tāj-ud-Dīn Subkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Tabaqāt Shāfi'iyyah vol.2 p.39 has written that it should be known that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to severely criticize those engaged in Ilm Kalām so that it should not result in something inappropriate. It is clear that if there is no need, then it is better to remain silent and speaking about it will be innovation.

Shaykh Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ spoke about certain issues of Kalām. 'Allāmah Abul Qāsim Nasrābādī says that he came to know that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ left Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ only because of this.

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says, 'This type of condition occurred in every era and every area, where if someone made an error, then another person corrected it, for which there will be reward. However, whatever Khatīb

Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and others have written, that Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ spoke about certain issues of Kalām so Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ cut off ties and because the general people supported Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was forced to stay in hiding in a house in Baghdad and he passed away there and only four people took part in the Janāzah, there is great doubt about the authenticity of all this. 'Allāmah Dhahabī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has indicated towards this in Mīzān-ul-I'tidāl vol.1 p.199. He said that there is inqitā' in the chain of narration of this.

Advice of Ibn Subkī regarding the Pious Predecessors

'Allāmah Tāj-ud-Dīn Subkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has written very beautifully with regards to whatever happened between Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He spoke justly. 'Allāmah 'Abdul Hayy Lucknowī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has drawn a principle from it and he ended his book, Ar-Raf' wat Takmīl on it.

He writes, 'O student and disciple, it is appropriate for you that you tread the path of the pious predecessors in etiquette. What did one say and write about the other, do not pay attention to that, except if a clear and definite proof is presented.

After this, if you can give some interpretation, and it is possible to have good thoughts, then Māsha Allāh, otherwise, turn away from it.

This is because you have not been created for this. Take interest in beneficial things and leave out useless and vain things. According to me, a student will remain noble as long as he does not delve into matters of the seniors and he does not take sides and pass decision against the other.'

Whatever happened between the pious scholars of the past, do not ever pay attention to it. If you are going to delve into it, then I fear your destruction. This is because they were all the outstanding Imāms of Dīn and one can give reasons for their statements. It is possible that you do not understand the correct context of something. Therefore, we should make Du'ā' of the happiness of Allāh for them and adopt silence regarding what happened between them, as is the case with the Mushājarāt-us-Sahābah.

Imām Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in the Gathering of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

In Tārīkh Baghdād vol.8 p.214, Khatīb Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes about Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and his turning away from the people of innovation and his prohibiting people from listening to them. He narrates from Ibn Sarrāj, 'One

day, Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said to me, 'I have come to know that Hārith Muhāsibī comes to you in great abundance. If you can, call him home and seat me at such a place where he cannot see me, so that I can hear him.' I said, 'As you wish.'

I was greatly disturbed at this request of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. I want to Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and said, 'Come to me tonight, bring your students.' He said, 'Ismā'īl, they are a large number. Feed just two dates. Then, according to your ability.' I arranged as requested.

Upon return, I went to inform Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. Subsequently, they came home after Maghrib and sat in the room on the upper floor. He remained engaged in his recitals. A little while later, Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and his students came. They ate, performed Eshā' and then engaged in optional Salāh. All the students sat silently in front of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. They said nothing until half the night passed. After this, a student took courage and asked about a certain matter. The Shaykh replied. All the students heard eagerly. Someone cried and someone stopped crying, whilst the Shaykh spoke.

I went to the upper floor to see what the condition of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was. I saw that he cried so much that he fell unconscious. Then I went to Shaykh Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and his students. This was his condition until the

morning. In the morning, all of them went away. I went to Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He had come to his senses. I said, "Abū 'Abdullāh, how did you find these people?" He said, "I have never seen the like of such people, nor have I heard talks about the realities like I heard from him. Whatever was brought to my notice, I did not feel his company appropriate for you." Saying this, he left the house.

'Allāmah Tāj-ud-Dīn Ibn Subkī in Tabaqāt Ash-Shāfi'iyyah vol.2 p.40 has written, 'Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ forbade Ismā'īl Ibn Ishāq from sitting in the company of Shaykh Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and his students because Ismā'īl did not have full knowledge of their rank. They were upon a very narrow path that no one else could tread. Whoever treads that path, there was fear that he will not be able to fulfil the rights of the path. Tāj-ud-Dīn Subkī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said the same thing.

However, this reason is weak according to me. I shall mention the correct reason soon.

In Al-Furū' vol.5 p.313, Imām Ibn Muflih Hanbalī mentioned the last sentence of the above-mentioned incident, and said, 'Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ forbade writing the talk of Mansūr Ibn 'Ammār and from listening to the one who explained it. Abul Husayn says that he did this because if a person had to be engaged in that talk, he would become negligent of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

Ibn Kathīr رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Al-Bidāyah wan Nihāyah vol.10 p.330 mentioned this incident under the biography of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and then writes, 'Bayhaqī has written on the merits of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ that it is possible that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ disliked adopting the company of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ because although he was an ascetic, but he had a number of views in Ilm Kalām and Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had severe hatred for Ilm Kalām. Alternatively, the reason is that Ismā'īl did not have the ability to tread their path in terms of abstinence.

Ibn Kathīr رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that this is not the case. Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ disliked the company of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ because in their speech, there was a great level of harshness in order to take the soul to task, harshness that was not prescribed in the Sharī'ah. This is the reason why when Abū Zur'ah came to know of Ar-Ri'āyah of Muhāsibī, he said that it is innovation. After this, he said to the person who brought the book, 'It is necessary for you to tread the path that Imām Mālik رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Sufyān Thaurī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Auzā'ī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Layth Ibn Sa'd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ took. Leave this book, as it is innovation.'

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ forbade Ismā'īl Ibn Ishāq from adopting their company because Ismā'īl felt that their company was the ideal, best and it was the path of truth.

This is supported by the detail that I have mentioned regarding the way of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ with Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

Muhaddith Ibn Abī Ya'lā has written in Tabaqāt Al-Hanābilah vol.2 p.279, 'Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ forbade speaking about wasāwis, and the thoughts that pass the heart and he used to say that we have only been commanded with the Noble Qur'ān and the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.'

On one occasion, he was asked about a Murīd. He said that the meaning of Murīd is that a person a person becomes with Allāh just as Allāh wants and whatever he wants, he leaves it for the sake of Allāh. This is an example. It is not a principle or rule that cannot be discussed.

Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to respect and honour the Sūfīs. On one occasion, he was asked about them sitting in the Masjid. He said that knowledge has caused them to sit in the Masājid.

Ibn Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ has mentioned in Kitāb Al-Qissās wal Mudhkkirīn p.131, 'I say that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a strict adherent to Hadīth, that is why he disliked any new thing, whether it was correct or not.

Shaykh Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ would say things regarding Mu'āmalāt that were not narrated from the pious

predecessors. Sometimes, he would go into the matters of Kalām, whereas Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ felt that engaging in it causes a person to become negligent. It is for this reason that he disliked Shaykh Muhāsibī.'

The view that I have mentioned is close to the above-mentioned detail. All praise is due to Allāh.

In the last few pages, I have mentioned some detail from Manāqib Imām Ahmad of Ibn Jauzī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, where Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ forbade from reading and thinking over the works of Abū Thaur, Abū 'Ubayd, Ishāq Ibn Rāhuyah, Sufyān Thaurī, Imām Mālik and other great scholars. He used to emphasize that they hold on strictly to what has been narrated.

It has been learnt that a great Imām like Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ forbade thinking and studying the books of the other great scholars because it should not lead one to becoming negligent of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Based on this, he would have forbidden to an even greater degree the books that are written from the wasāwis and thoughts.

This detail will apply in the case where the incident is taken to be true; otherwise, some things are such that they will cause the heart of every person to doubt. Due to this, after mentioning the incident, Dhahabī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says in Mīzān-ul-I'tidāl that the chain of transmission is correct, but it is very weak and cannot be accepted. It does not settle in my heart

and such things are far-fetched to have come from Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

From the writings of Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Ibn Rajab Hanbalī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Khatīb Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Ibn Kathīr رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ it is clear that it is correct that Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ had criticized Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ only on account of him delving into matters of Kalām. As far as his worship is concerned, he did not say anything, but they praised him.

In short, whether the story is true or false, it draws a picture of the 'ulamā' of that time and their nature and those that followed in the footsteps of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

Another shortcoming is found here. The writer also spoke about it. The shortcoming is that he gave place to da'īf and maudū' narrations. He relied on these narrations and drew principles from them.

This is the reason why Shaykh Abū Bakr Ibn Al-Arabī praised Muhāsibī, but could not stop at mentioning this. He writes, 'The greatest scholar who discussed this Hadīth is Hārith Ibn Asad. The Hadīth is, 'A person cannot become a Muttaqī until he leaves that in which there is no problem out of fear for falling into something in which there is a problem.'

Shaykh Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ discussed this narration in detail. His words were beneficial. It would have been better if he did

not make da'īf Ahādīth the basis of his principles. If the Muhaddithīn come to know of these, they mock at Muhāsibī, whereas Muhāsibī meets with high-ranking Muhaddithīn.

Regarding this matter, our view is that Muhāsibī felt that it is permissible to use this type of Ahādīth for matters of reformation. May Allāh be pleased with Bukhārī; he used to feel that the Dīn and the heart should only be linked to Sahīh Ahādīth.

We have the same view. If we incline to the view of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, then there is permission for weak Ahādīth in matters of advice through which softness will be created in the hearts. However, there is no scope for it in the matters of belief.

This shortcoming is found in the books of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. There are a number of da'īf and one maudū' Hadīth in Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn. This ease in Hadīth of Muhāsibī was taken further by Shaykh Abū Tālib Makkī, Imām Ghazālī and in other books on Tasawwuf.

Tasawwuf of Muhāsibī

The nature of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ is good and pure. The Tasawwuf he compiled in his books give due consideration to the Qur'ān, Sunnah, statements and deeds of the Sahābah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and their understanding. His books do not contain

any philosophy. His Tasawwuf calls for knowledge, practice, reformation, purifying ones self and it calls a person to become close to the pleasure of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ. In other words, one can say that whatever Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ says and writes, one can definitely practice on it in some way or another. We should be grateful to him, and Inshā Allāh, he will get reward.

Praise of Muhāsibī and his Books

A number of Imāms and high ranking personalities have praised the foresight, Tasawwuf, taqwā and knowledge of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. Among them is Imām Abū Muhammad 'Abdul Haq Siqlī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He was asked, 'Which scholar's books should a person read?' He said, "The books of that person in whom one hopes for his leadership and that will help the people. His greatest work should be that he must study the subsidiary rulings and create understanding in the rulings. This is because he needs this most. However, together with this, he must also study Hadīth like Muwatta Mālik, Bukhārī and other authentic Hadīth works.

However, if there is a person in whom one cannot hope for leadership, then he should study rulings and he should ponder mostly over the authentic Ahādīth in which there is Fiqh and things that cause the heart to be moved, virtues and other matters that he can benefit from.

In short, a person should keep his soul at that position.

As far as the books of Muhāsibī are concerned, this is most important for a person to think and ponder about, whether there is hope for him becoming a leader or not. This is because these books have great benefit. The one who stays away from them is ignorant and has fallen into misunderstanding about the value of these works.

Eloquence of Muhāsibī

The eloquence, clarity of speech and beauty of expression of Muhāsibī are all of a very high level. His explanation is very effective and his tongue is very moving. His works like Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn and At-Tawahhum have very high-level sentences and can be repeated as they have powerful words. They turn the hearts and open the ears.

There is nothing surprising about this because Shaykh Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was linked to a golden age. On one side there were eloquent people like Jahiz and on the other side there were pious people like Ma'rūf Karkhī and Sirrī Saqatī. Therefore, it is not anything new that Shaykh Muhāsibī had a powerful pen and tongue and a pure soul and heart.

A Few Incidents of his Life

1. 'Allāmah Ibn Zafar Maghribī writes in Anbā' Nujabā' Al-Abnā' p.148 that during his childhood, Hārith Muhāsibī passed by a few children. They were playing at the door of a date seller. Hārith Muhāsibī waited to play with the children. During this time, the person of the house came out and had dates in his hand. He told Hārith Muhāsibī to eat the dates. Muhāsibī said, "What is the matter with these dates?" he said, "I have traded dates with a certain person now and these dates are from them." Hārith Muhāsibī said, "Do you know the person?" He said, "I know him." Hearing this, Hārith Muhāsibī turned to the children that were playing and said, "Is this person a Muslim?" The children replied in the affirmative. He left them and went ahead. The date trader went behind him. He caught Hārith Muhāsibī and said, "By Allāh, I shall not leave your hand, until you tell me what is in your heart about me?" He said, "If you are a Muslim, then look for the owner of the dates so that you can be saved from sin, just as a thirsty person seeks water to save his life. O man, you are a Muslim and are feeding Harām to the children?" The man said, "Now, I shall not do business for the world."

2. ‘Allāmah Qushayrī in Ar-Risālah p.15, Ibn Hajar in Tahdhāb-ut-Tahdhīb vol.2 p.135 and other authors have explained that Junayd Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “When Hārith Muhāsibī passed away, then he did not even have five coins, whereas his father left seventy thousand Dirhams in his estate. However, Hārith Muhāsibī did not take a single Dirham because his father had a different view with regards to Taqdīr. Therefore, out of taqwā, he did not feel it appropriate to take anything of his estate.’

3. Hāfiz Abū Nu’aym and others have explained that Junayd Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, “Muhāsibī went through great poverty. One day, I was sitting at his door when the Shaykh passed there. On that day, I saw the effect of great hunger. I asked, “If you come inside with us, we shall get something to eat.” He asked if I could arrange it. I replied in the affirmative. I went in the house and he came in with me. I quickly headed to the house of my uncle as his house was bigger than mine and he had better food. I presented an abundance of food before him. He put his hand forward and took the morsel to his mouth. I saw that he was chewing but he could not swallow it. He suddenly got up, went out but did not tell me anything. The next day, when I met him, I said, “At first, you were happy, but later you changed.” He

said, "I was indeed hungry and I also tried to eat the food you presented, but there was a sign that came from Allāh. If the food was doubtful, then a certain odour would reach my nose and my nature would not accept it. Therefore, I threw the food at the dorrstep and went out." 'Allāmah Qushayrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ added, "Then I said, "Will you come to my house today?" He replied in the affirmative. I presented some dry bread of my house. He ate it and said, "When you present food to a beggar, then present like this."

4. 'Allāmah Sha'rānī in Tabaqāt Al-Kubrā vol.1 p.64 mentions with reference to Muhāsibī that he said, "I wrote a book on Ma'rifah and it seemed good to me. One day, I was reading it with a sense of praise, when a youngster wearing torn and tattered clothing came to me. After making Salām, he said, "Abū 'Abdullāh, is Ma'rifah the right of Allāh upon the creation, or is it the right of the creation upon Allāh?" I said, "It is a right upon the creation for Allāh." He said, "Then, for Allāh it is better to open up Ma'rifah for the one who deserves it." I said, "No, Ma'rifah is the right upon Allāh for the creation." He said, "Then, Allāh is more just to oppress His servants." Saying this, he went away. Shaykh Hārith Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, "After this, I took the book and washed the writing away. I

decided that I shall never speak about Ma'rifah again."

5. 'Allāmah Qushayrī in Ar-Risālah p.15 writes about Shaykh Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ that Ustadh Abū 'Abdullāh Ibn Khafīf said, "Follow five people from our Mashāyikh. Leave the rest upon their condition. Hārith Muhāsibī, Junayd Baghdadī, Abū Muhammad Ruwaym, Abū 'Abbās Ibn 'Atā' and 'Amr Ibn 'Uthmān Makkī. This is because they gathered knowledge and reality."

6. Khatīb Baghdādī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ in Tārīkh Baghdad vol.8 p.215 narrates from Qadī Husayn Ibn Ismā'īl Muhāmilī, he says, 'Abū Bakr Ibn Hārūn explained that Muhaddith Abū Thaur heard from Ja'far that at the time of the demise of Muhāsibī, he was present. He said, "If I see that which I like, then I shall smile and if I see something else, you will see it on my face." Ja'far says that he smiled and passed away.

May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ send mercy upon Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and bless him with honour. He went to his Rabb smiling, like a traveler returns to his wife and children. May Allāh grant him the high stages in 'Iliyyīn. He was buried in Baghdad. The grave of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ is well known until today. There is a Masjid close by, named Masjid Muhāsibī.

Advice

1. Everything has an essence and gem. The essence and gem of man is his intellect. The gem of the intellect is the ability to do good. In other words, the gem and essence of the intellect is patience.
2. The best people in the Ummah are those whom the world does not cause them to neglect the hereafter, nor does the hereafter cause them to be negligent of the world.
3. Good character is bearing difficulties, being less angry, having a smiling face and pure speech.
4. The abstinence of every zāhid is in accordance to his recognition. His recognition is in accordance to his intellect and the intellect is in accordance to the strength of his īmān.
5. An oppressive person will have to face regret, even if people praise him. An oppressed person will be in peace and safety, even if people disgrace him. A person who likes contentment is wealthy and a greedy person is poor, even if he has money.
6. He who is not grateful for a bounty, he has invited for the destruction of the bounty.

7. He who has reformed his inner self through sincerity and Murāqabah, Allāh will correct his outer through sacrifice and following the Sunnah.

8. No person can be pious, except that through his piety, Allāh will cause others to become pious. A person is not corrupt, except that through his corruption, others will also become corrupt.

9. The high standing of being the true servant of Allāh is that you do not take anything to be your property, and have the conviction that you have no control over the benefit and harm of your self.

10. Sincerity takes a person out of the matters of Allāh and the soul of a person was the first creation.

11. The person who makes effort for his inside, Allāh will make him inherit the beauty of the outside. The person who, with effort on his inside, makes his outside beautiful, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will give him guidance from His side. He says, 'Those who strive for Us, We shall guide them to Our paths. Indeed, Allāh is with those who do good.'

Books

There are many books written by Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. Some of the famous ones are:

1. Ar-Ri'āyah lihuqūqillāh
2. At-Tawahhum
3. Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn
4. Risālat-ul-Wasāya
5. Ādāb-un-Nufūs
6. Sharh-ul-Ma'rifah
7. Bad' man Anāb ilā Allāh
8. Al-Masā'il fiz Zuhd
9. Al-Masā'il fī A'māl Al-Qulūb wal Jawārih
10. Al-Makāsib wal War' wash Shubha wa Bayān Mubāhuha wa Mahthūruha wa Ikhtilāf un Nās fi Talabiha war Radd 'ala Al-Ghālitīn fihā
11. Māhiyat-ul-'Aql wa Ma'nāhu wa Ikhtilāf un Nās fihi
12. Al Ba'th wan Nushūr
13. Kitāb fid Dimā'
14. Kitāb fit Tafakkur wal I'tibār
15. Risālat-ul-Murāqabah

16. At-Tanbīh ‘alā A’māl Al-Qulūb fid Dalālat ‘alā Wahdāniyyat Allāh
17. Kitāb-ul-Adhama
18. Al-Qasd war Rujū’ ilā Allāh
19. Kitāb-un-Nasā’ih
20. Mukhtasar Kitāb Fahm-us-Salāh
21. Kitāb-ur-Ridā
22. Fahm-ul-Qur’ān
23. Fahm-us-Sunan

Comments

Hadrat Maulānā Mujīb-ul-Ghaffār

Shaykh-ul-Hadīth: Jāmi'ah Mazhar-ul-'Ulūm, Banaras

The book Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn was written on the subject of Islāmic Tasawwuf. This book was written towards the end of the second and beginning of the third Hijrī centrury. It covers subjects like the defects of the soul and how to rectify and purify it. The book was written by a great and high ranking scholar, Imām Abū 'Abdullāh Al-Hārith Ibn Asad Al Muhāsibī Basrī Baghdadī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

He is among the senior Sūfīs who have been followed. All the work on the subject of the defects of the soul done by the scholars of Islām, all of them came after the work of Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ.

Imām 'Abdullāh Ibn Mubārak رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote Kitāb-uz-Zuhd war-Raqā'iq and covered the topics of Zuhd, Tasawwuf, good character and etiquette. His name is probably at the top of the list. This book became a source and reference for the books later on, like Ar-Ri'āyah, At-Tawahhum and so on.

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ writes that Imām Muhammad Zāhid Al-Kautharī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to say that Imām Ghazālī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was greatly affected by Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. This is the reason why he included sections of Ar-Ri'āyah li Huqūqillāh verbatim in Ihyā'.

The works of Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ are more than two hundred. Whatever topic he goes into, he explains it in detail. However, in Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn, he wrote very comprehensively and briefly. This is so that the seeker of goodness and reform could memorise it and bear the content in mind. Moreover, one should read it in depth so that one can gain recognition and proper knowledge. The common Muslim can also read it if he has little time.

This book is very valuable in terms of the content like character and etiquette, patience and gratitude, abstinence and contentment, taqwā and steadfastness, sincerity and correction of intention, concern for the hereafter and staying away from the trials of the world.

Every line of it is a deep ocean; it is enveloped in truthfulness and sincerity. It pulls the pious hearts towards it and is effective in calling for concern and deeds.

The effect of the book was that it attracted the attention of Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. He used to read it and cry. Subsequently, he acquired the manuscripts, then he did research on it and prepared a copy of it. Then, in the light of his knowledge and foresight, he wrote the annotation. He did the research of the Ahādīth and explained the texts. He included many incidents of the pious predecessors and added proofs so that the subject matter would be more worthy of acceptance by the Muslims. This

would create a greater effect for them to practice and it would prove much more purer for the heart and thought. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ blessed him with the chance to publish it. Through his efforts, the book was published a number of times and it adorned the world of knowledge and it was blessed with far reaching acceptance. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ bless the book and annotation with acceptance and may He cause the students and seekers to benefit from it. May He reward the author. Āmīn

Translator

The great scholar of this time, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān Saheb Ilāhābādī dāmat barakātuhum was given this book as a gift. He also fell in love with the book. Why should this not be the case when it is perfumed with the knowledge of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. It has the statements of the Sahābah رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُمْ and the pious.

The heart of Maulānā was greatly affected by it and it brought great happiness to him. He would keep it with him at home and on journey. He would engage in studying it. He would tell his friends and associates that this book is very effective and is full of foresight.

He read the annotation of Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُٱللَّهُ and even more affected and felt the

enthusiasm to have this book translated into Urdu. This would be a means of guidance for the Urdu speaking public. This is especially the case in this time where good character traits are dwindling. Very few are beautified with them. It is not surprising if people read this book and it will become a means of light for their eyes and they will realise that they are very low in rank in terms of Islāmic character and where have we reached. To Allāh do We belong and to Him is our return.

Hadrat Maulānā translated the text, despite his many engagements and with the help of Allāh, he completed it in a month and six days. All praise is for Allāh. He then gave it to Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ to translate the annotation. Maulānā ‘Abdullāh رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was worthy of the task, looking at his high rank in Arabic and knowledge. He completed the translation in a beautiful way. I hope that the people of knowledge will appreciate this work. May Allāh reward him.

Hadrat Maulānā gave the work to a number of scholars for editing so that he could gain full satisfaction. He was very cautious and would still inquire if there were any errors. He requested that any mistake be pointed out so that it could be corrected.

The introductory sections and forewords were translated by Maulānā ‘Abdur Rashīd Bastawī. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ reward

him well. In this way, the benefit of the book was completed from every angle.

Hadrat Maulānā named the work Nasīhat-ul-Muslimīn Tarjumah Risālat-ul-Mustarshidīn. This is a very beautiful name. The truth is that enthusiasm and well wishing with the Muslims calls for practice, otherwise this major work was not easy. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ place some of the pain that Muhammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had in the hearts of His pious servants. They are grieved about the condition of the Muslims. They tolerate every difficulty. They spend every ounce of energy they have in order to reform and correct them; they do not want any individual of the Ummah to be destroyed.

According to the instruction of Hadrat Maulānā, despite our inability, we wrote a few lines. I then remembered the words of Hadrat Maulānā As'adullāh Rāmpūrī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. He used to say that sometimes a command is above respect and sometimes the method of respect is above the command. From that time, I would be very ashamed and rebuke my heart, saying, 'you have no shame about lifing the pen for such a major work'.

Anyway, my inability is not anything new for you. I admit my inability and defectiveness. May Allāh keep Hadrat Maulānā with good health, safety and ease and may He allow people to benefit from his blessings and munificence. May

Allāh take great work of Dīn from him and may He let the Muslims benefit greatly from this book. Amīn

May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ reward Imām Muhāsibī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Shaykh ‘Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and all those who helped in the publication of this work. May He make this work a means of their salvation and a means of gaining closeness to Him. May Allāh accept. Āmīn

وصلى الله على النبي الكريم

Mujīb-ul-Ghaffār

Rajab 1430

Brief Biography of Maulānā Mujīb-ul-Ghaffār رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ

Maulānā was born in 1367 A.H in Mau. He studied initially under Hadrat Muslih-ul-Ummat Maulānā Wasī-ullāh at Madrasah Wasiyyat-ul-'Ulūm, Ilahabad. He had the chance to learn under Maulānā 'Abdur-Rahmān Jāmī رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and Maulānā Muhammad Hanīf Jaunpūrī. For Daurah Hadīth, he went to Dār-ul-'Ulūm Deoband and was fortunate to study Bukhārī Sharīf under Maulānā Fakhr-ud-Dīn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. After graduating in 1389, he taught at Jāmi'ah Mazhar-ul-'Ulūm Banaras. He continued teaching Bukhārī Sharīf until the end.

Reformation:

At first, he established contact with Hadrat Muslih-ul-Ummat رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ. After he passed away, he was linked to Hadrat Maulānā Shah Muhammad Ahmad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and then turned to me. Looking at his great ability, we gave him ijāzat in the four chains of Tasawwuf.

Together with teaching, he gave due importance to spiritual reformation and nurturing. Definitely, he had a good feeling and love for us until the end. Therefore, I feel it a good fortune to have good thoughts about a scholar of his nature. May Allāh make him a means of benefit for us in the hereafter. Āmīn

Demise:

He passed away in 10 Shawwal 1430, 30 September 2009 in Banaras. He was buried the next day after Zuhr.

Muhammad Qamr-uz-Zamān Ilahabadi

18 Shawwal 1430

Translator's Note

By the grace of Allah سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ, translation completed on 24 Dhul Hijjah 1439, 4 September 2018. All praise is due to Allah سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ for blessing us with the opportunity to translate this magnificent text. May Allah سُبْحَانَهُوَتَعَالَىٰ accept from the author and translator and take this work worldwide for the guidance of humanity, Amīn.

As with all endeavours, there are bound to be perfections and shortcomings. The perfections are from Allah and the shortcomings from us. Kindly feel free to provide constructive feedback at ghazali.in.motion@gmail.com

Abdullah Moolla, Azaadville